FEBRUARY 1967

Commentary

VOLUME FORTY-THREE, NUMBER TWO

Daniel P. Moynihan

on

"THE MOYNIHAN REPORT" & ITS CRITICS

WILL SOVIET JEWRY SURVIVE?
Elie Wiesel

UPHEAVAL IN CHINA
Benjamin I. Schwartz

THE PEOPLE WHO WALKED—A Story
Tadeusz Borowski

WRITING AMERICAN
Louis Kronenberger

LOVE MYSTIFIED: A CRITIQUE OF NORMAN O. BROWN
Herbert Marcuse

ATHLETIC JEWS
Meyer Liben

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Nathan Glazer David Schiller
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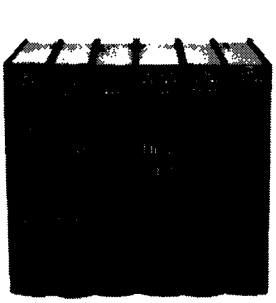

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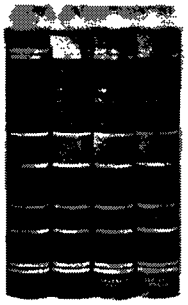

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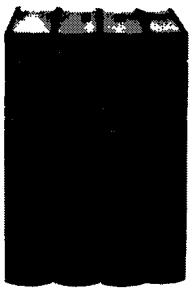

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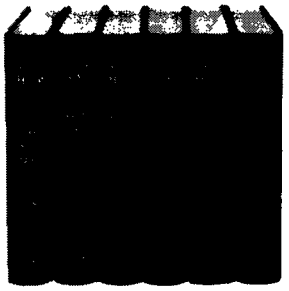

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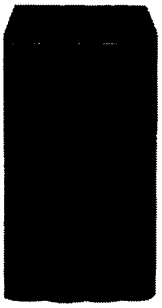

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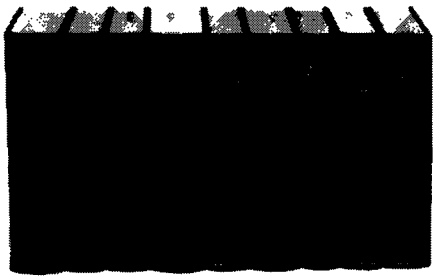

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Commentary

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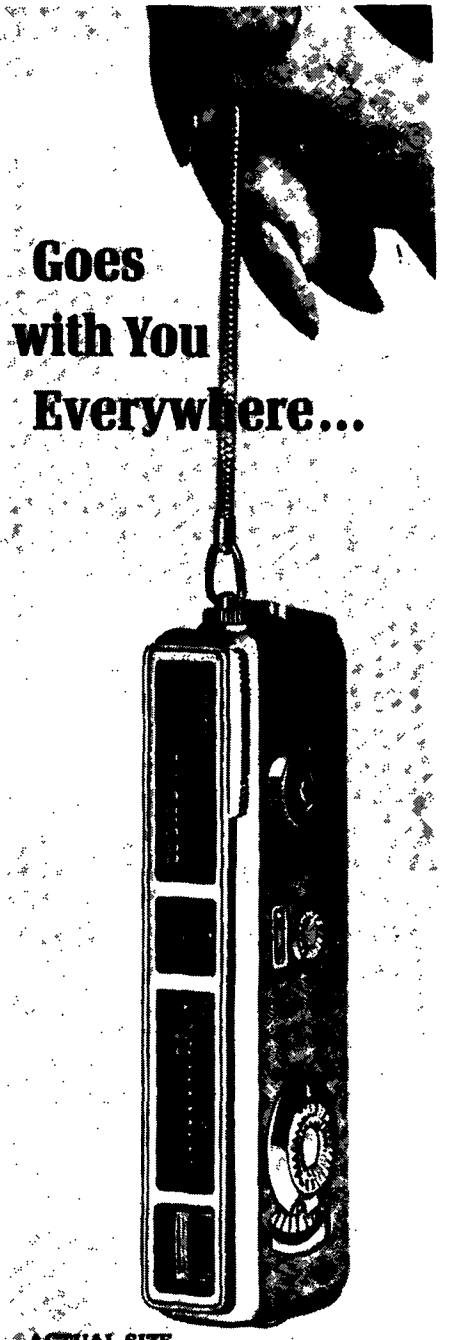

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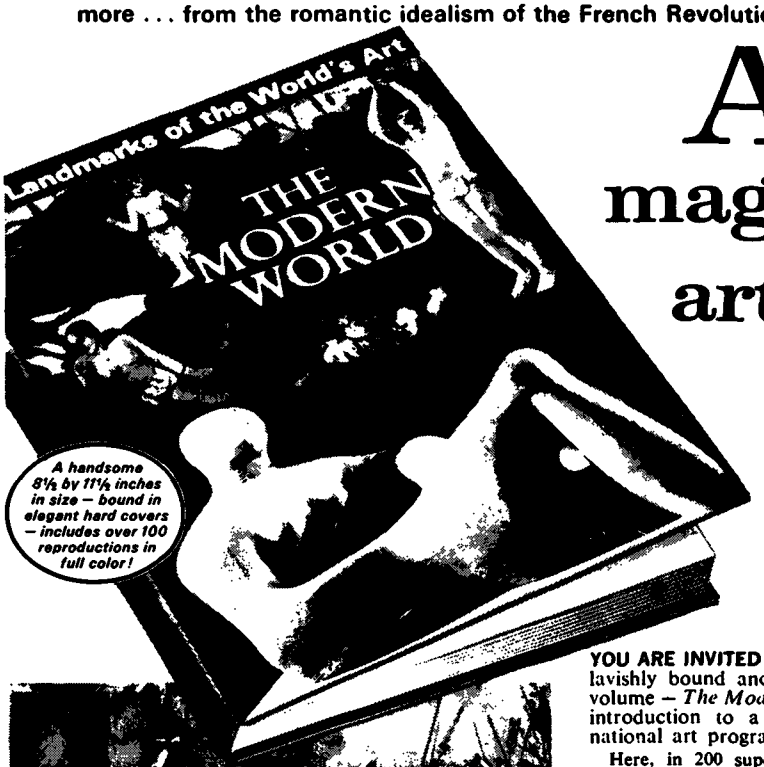

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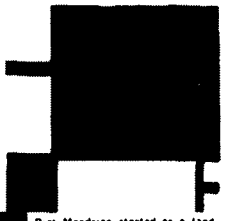

Piet Mondrian started as a landscape painter, eventually simplified everything he saw into compositions of vertical and horizontal lines.

Umberto Boccioni's bronze figure in motion takes its inspiration from the fluttering draperies of Baroque and Hellenistic sculpture

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LETTERS FROM READERS

Playing Ball

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I am but one of approximately two-to-three dozen Jewish baseball writers—writers from big city newspapers—who cover major league baseball teams from the beginning of spring training through the World Series—and as such should inform your readers that Mordecai Richler was off base quite a few times in his "Koufax the Incomparable" [November 1966].

Richler indicates that Hank Greenberg was "tragically inhibited by his Jewish heritage" and thus held back and hit 58 home runs instead of breaking Babe Ruth's record of 60 because the breaking of such a record ". . . would be considered pushy of him . . . and not a good thing for the Jews." Balderdash! Greenberg didn't hit 60 because pitchers stopped giving him anything good to hit at—probably because he was Jewish, and probably also because no pitcher wants to be remembered for throwing historic home run balls. We must assume also that the pressure was a factor, as it always is; what also hurt was that a season-ending doubleheader (in Cleveland) had to be moved to a bigger ball park with a longer left field, and that the second game wasn't played to a nine-inning finish. . . .

I agree that the *Time* magazine cover story on Koufax was distorted, but to accuse *Time* of anti-Semitism is presumptuous. *Time* has erred on plenty of other sports cover stories, as have many of the other slicks. The image of Koufax as an intellectual (which he is not) was featured, I suspect, because it made "a good angle" and probably because a *Time* stringer spotted a bookshelf. Moreover, that Koufax likes his privacy isn't unusual. Many star players, Feller, Musial, Williams *et al.*, roomed alone in their later years and did their best to avoid the mob.

Author Richler is looking too hard, also, when he emphasizes that Koufax, in his autobiography, points out that he was helped most by two other Jews. . . . Sherry, a catcher, advised Koufax not to throw hard, advice I'm sure Sherry has given to dozens and dozens of Gentile pitchers, and advice which previously had been given to Koufax by Gentile coaches. Sherry simply happened to mention this at precisely the right moment, before a meaningless exhibition game, and when Koufax was . . . eager to listen. . . .

As for Allan Roth, he was a statistician with the Dodgers, the only full-time statistician employed by a big league club. Roth borders on genius in this field. It was his job to keep and translate his findings to the Dodger players and the Dodger management. Whatever information Roth gave Koufax (and I don't know what this was), I'm sure was part of the routine. Richler's attitude is disgusting if he thinks Roth would favor Koufax because both are Jews. In effect, Richler is saying that Roth would withhold significant statistics from Gentiles such as Drysdale, Newcombe, or Podres.

I agree that from a so-called Jewish standpoint, the Koufax book is disappointing, and I agree with Richler that Koufax protesteth too much in emphasizing that he is not anti-athlete. It is unfortunate that Koufax didn't control his anger, not only at the *Time* story but at several minor pieces that preceded it. In his book, Koufax tells us almost nothing about his Jewishness; that he is Jewish is mentioned almost in passing. But he doesn't owe us any detailed explanations. As a baseball book, and as a text in pitching, I found it excellent.

I should think that COMMENTARY, in this rare instance when it did touch on sports, could have done better than offer the long-distance musings of a novelist. . . .

JEROME HOLTZMAN
Chicago *Sun-Times*
Chicago, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Richler very obviously doesn't think much of Koufax. Then why did he bother reading the Koufax book, or writing about it? . . .

E. KINTISCH
Alexandria, Virginia

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

To test my own incredulous reaction, I have read aloud to several friends Mordecai Richler's article in which Richler, among other things, accuses *Time* of anti-Semitism for writing that Koufax has intellectual interests, and in which he hypothesizes that Hank Greenberg may have been "tragically inhibited" from topping Babe Ruth's home-run record for fear of being regarded as a pushy Jew.

I find that my friends and I are in unanimous agreement that the review was a joke, but we are split 50-50 on whether the joke was intentional or unintentional. . . .

JAMES N. MILLER
Croton-on-Hudson, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I would like to reassure Mordecai Richler . . . that things have never looked happier for Jewish major leaguers. In addition to Koufax the incomparable, the last World Series featured . . . two winning pitchers—naturally on the Baltimore Orioles—who are of Jewish background. Their names are Jim Palmer and Moe Drabowsky.

And, for what must be a first in baseball history, two pitchers who were originally scheduled to face each other in a game between the Los Angeles Dodgers and the Chicago Cubs, stayed home (or perhaps went to synagogue) on that day because it happened to be Yom Kippur. The next day Ken Holtzman, a youngster on Leo Durocher's pitching staff, came up against Koufax—and beat him.

Can any baseball buff remember the last time two Jewish pitchers faced each other in a major league game the day after Yom Kippur?

RAY ROBINSON
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I am shocked that Mr. Richler, in his treatise on *Curve Balls: Are They Good or Bad for the Jews?* overlooked Willie Davis's three errors in one inning behind Koufax in the 1966 World Series—which was one of the most flagrant acts of Negro anti-Semitism since the Panic of 1908.

He does get somewhere in pointing out the Jewish-conspiracy angle in the Norm Sherry-Koufax cabal; however, he does not really go deep enough. What of Norm's brother Larry—also a Dodger pitcher at the time—stopped from the advice that made a super star because of piddling sibling rivalry? There's one for Bill Stern!

And yea, verily, let us weep for the likes of Don Drysdale—disenfranchised WASP—alone in a sea of Gentile coaches whose knowledge

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of baseball never had the benefit the secret indoctrination into t *Protocols of the Elders of Swat.* the way, what is that resident nius, Norm Sherry, doing tod Have I somehow missed his na among the current great pitchi coaches of baseball?

And finally, finally, the true st of the whispered Greenberg cap wherein he was visited by repres tatives of the Anti-Defamati League, the American Jewish Co mittee and Congress, and the ma many Friends of the Hebrew U versity, who said unto him: "H shel, thou shalt not Swat; whith Ruth goest, thou goest not."

I am looking forward with gre anticipation to Mr. Richler's exp sure of Mike Epstein (the se labeled "super-Jew" rookie of t Baltimore Orioles) who all "i siders" know is a robot created at secret plant in the Negev a shipped to Baltimore for obvio chauvinistic reasons.

AMRAM M. DUCOV
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTAR

As a professional athlete in t *highest sense of the word,* Ha Greenberg would never have p posely failed to tie or break Rut record. The material gain he cou have realized by attaining this go would have been matched only l the great prestige and glory th naturally come along with the ma ical figure of sixty home-run Greenberg failed only because t pressure, magnified tenfold by t press, weighed too heavily on h shoulders. Very rarely is one able hit the ball into the seats when h is seeking to do so. Home-runs com from natural strokes of the bat, an Greenberg's stroke in those last fi games was anything but natura The pitchers, also, were not givin the Detroit slugger anything to good to hit, not wishing to hav the dubious honor of surrenderin number sixty. In short, it was th pressure that made Greenberg's ba too heavy, not the political atmo phere. Perhaps Mr. Richler shoul check his facts before his nex article on the National Pastim

MARSHALL ADESMA
Brooklyn, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY

I am stunned by . . . some star tling statements made by Mordeca Richler. . . .

Even to hint at the possibilit that the Hall of Fame baseball player, Hank Greenberg, "held

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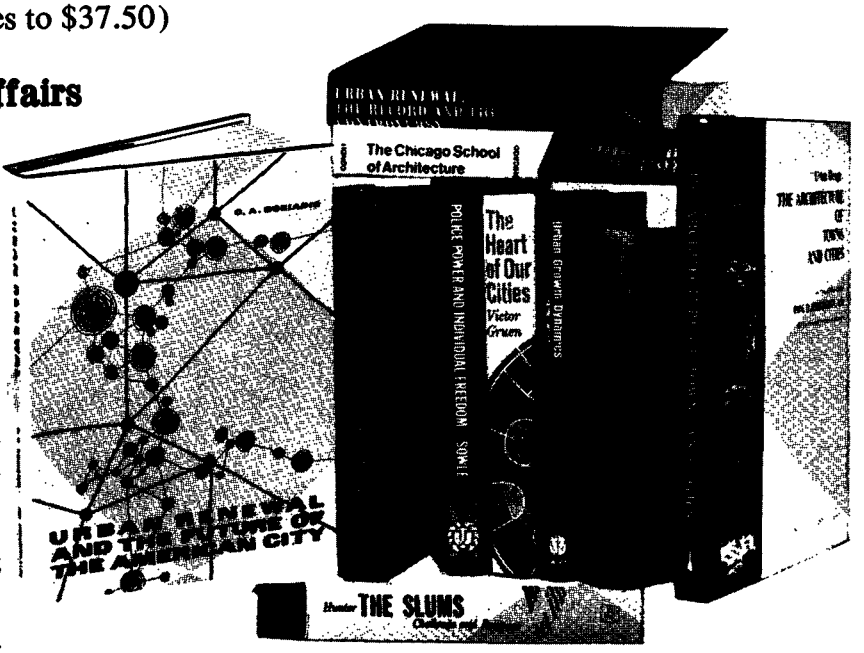

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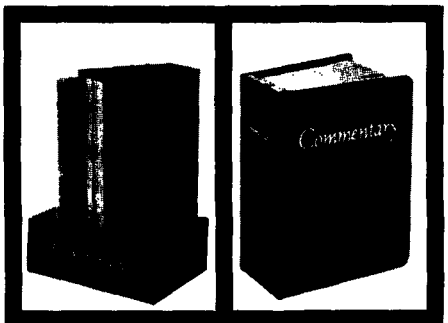

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back" in his efforts to break Babe Ruth's home run record, for any reason, is shocking. To state that Greenberg considered it would be "pushy" of him to do so, is almost too silly for comment. I shudder to think of a player in the Hall of Fame being accused of not giving his all. . . .

Richler states that "many boys found opposition at home" when they went out for sports. This is understandable. Our parents were not sports-minded, because of their European sufferings, . . . I'm sure our people didn't get many opportunities to play ball in the *shtetl*, while running away from pogroms.

I disagree that there is a Jewish problem in baseball today. If Walter Alston keeps a Jewish calendar on his desk, . . . it is because he is a good administrator, and needs this reminder in his scheduling of pitchers' rotations, and not because of "sensitivity." . . .

So far as playing baseball on the Jewish holidays goes, and yelling, *pipickhead* at Kermit, this is not a baseball problem. I see with my own eyes too many Jews of all denominations mowing lawns, shopping, and doing numerous other chores on the *Shabbes*. . . .

Mr. Richler's article may do serious harm in the struggle against discrimination. . . . Maybe, according to Richler, even Kermit Kitman might have been a good hitter, but he was afraid the Montreal non-Jewish population would think he was "pushy."

SAMUEL HEFT
Long Beach, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I greatly enjoyed Mordecai Richler's significant comments on Sandy Koufax, and the profound questions he raised about the role of Jews in American sports. Certainly much research still needs to be done in this area, and I hope that some of the provocative points raised by Richler will be picked up and followed through by our social scientists, many of whom are capable of turning, say, a called strike into a three-volume study of discrimination in the subculture of American athletics.

It seems to me that the most important and still unresolved point in Mr. Richler's discussion was his shrewd analysis of Hank Greenberg's holding back with 58 home runs in 1938 rather than passing the Babe's record and thus leaving himself open to accusations of "pushiness." I wonder, in fact, if this may

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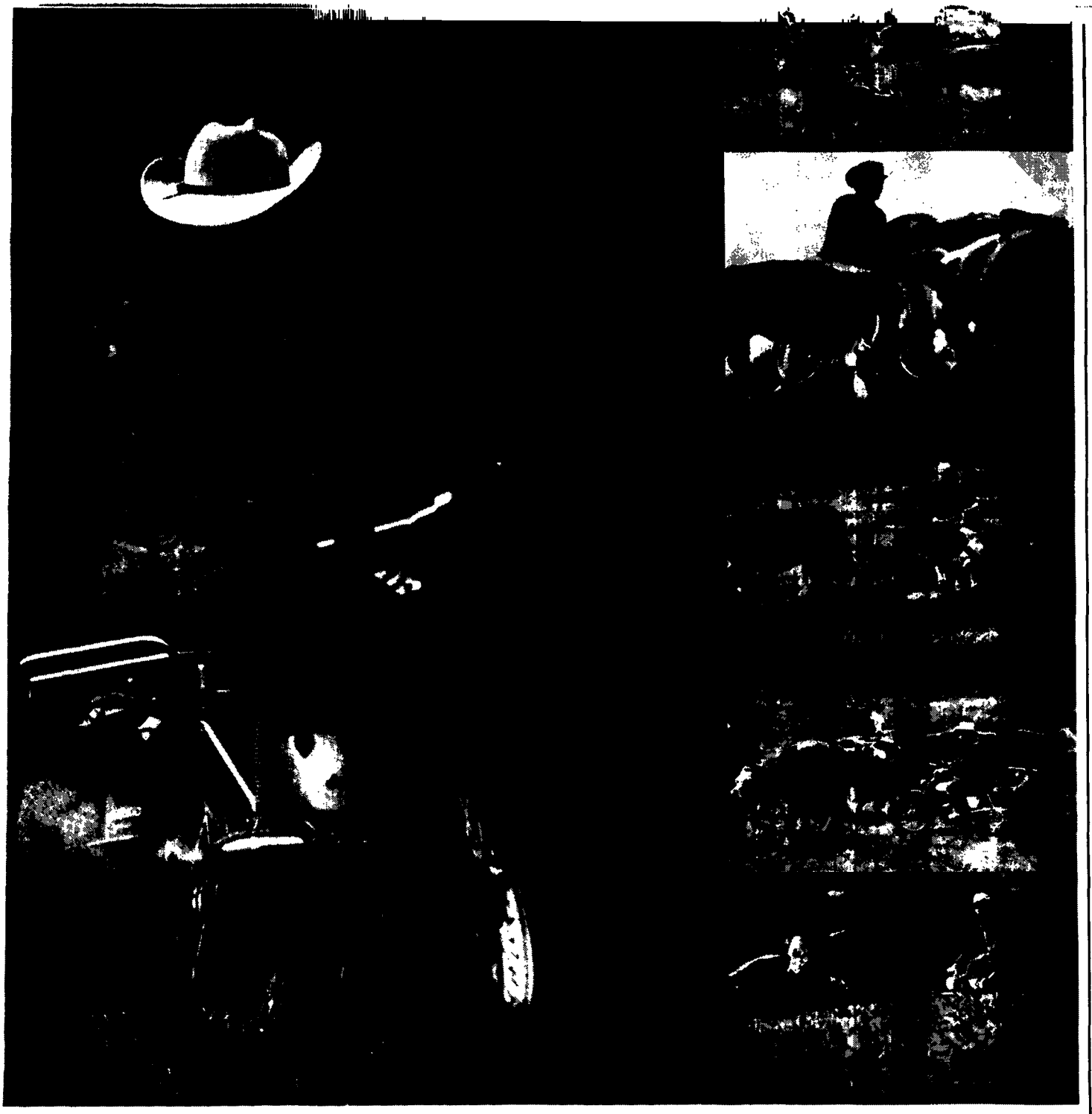

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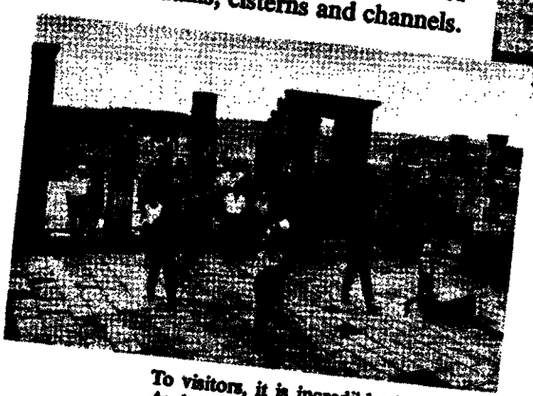

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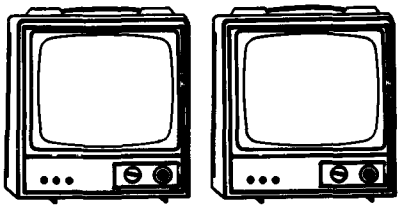
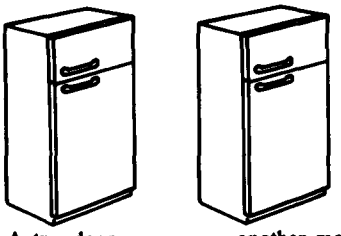


A 12-inch TV set priced at $89.95... **OR** another unit priced at $120.00?



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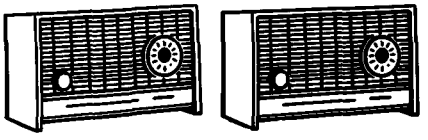

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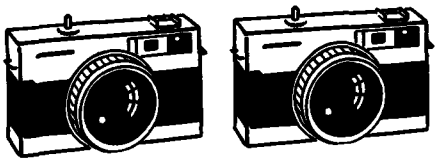

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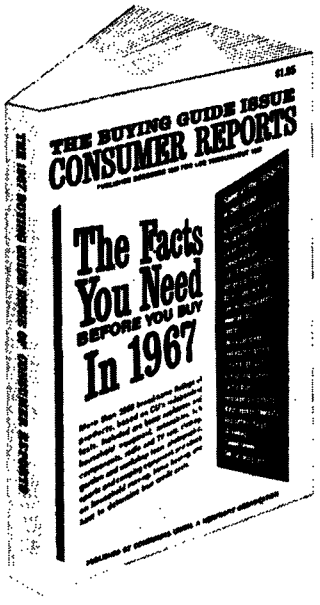

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not also have something to do with Koufax's failure to win the Cy Young award once during the past four years—a year when the award fell significantly to WASP hurler Dean Chance.

As to the crucial matter of whether Norm Sherry would have "done the same" for Don Drysdale as he did in giving such helpful pitching advice to Koufax, I would like to report on a similar situation which will hopefully alleviate certain fears of non-Jewish athletes and thus strengthen the bonds of interfaith understanding.

I do not, unfortunately, own a copy of the *Encyclopedia of Jews in Sports,* though I doubt that this excellent volume delves very deeply into the history of high school sports. I assume, then, that the following incident is unfamiliar to most readers. In my years as a sportswriter and columnist ("Sportlite") for the Shortridge High School *Daily Echo* in Indianapolis, I came to admire a number of Jewish athletes who in fact by their prowess on the gridiron or hardwood were able to break into the otherwise WASP-dominated social in-group of the school. Such stellar performers come to mind as Art "Bullets" Klein, whose battering power as a fullback on the Blue Devil eleven laid to rest for all of us any suspicion that a Jew was a "sissy" or afraid of physical contact; the graceful ball-handling and excellent marksmanship of Ray "Rosy" Rosenthal and Sammy "Asa" Glanzman (a nickname insisted on by Glanzman himself, perhaps in an effort to improve the image of his people by the constant reminder that his feats of skill were being performed by a Jew) also eliminated any suspicion that Jews did not "have rhythm" or were rendered incapable by their heritage of excelling in Indiana's most hallowed pastime, namely basketball.

The incident I wish to report, however, concerns another pioneer of his people, Dick "Ferdie" Falender. Until Falender made the first-string of the freshman football team in the fall of 1946, there had not been, as far as I know, any outstanding Jewish *linemen* in the annals of Blue Devil grid legend. This is a significant point, for there were those who secretly speculated that while a Jew might indeed be a backfield star, it was the backfield that got all the glory anyway while the unsung linemen did all the work and took it on the chin, just so the high-stepping backs could

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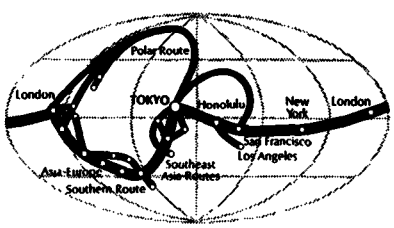

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make the headlines. The implications are obvious.

It is true that on the same historic 1946 freshman team, the position of left end was filled by "Bullets" Klein's younger brother, Norm, but "end" is something of a glamor position on the line, since the end is free to catch passes and make long dashes for glory, and in fact is only on the outside fringe of the grubby, manly, semi-murderous infighting that occurs on each clash of the opposing forward walls. A Jew playing end might only cause skeptics to say something like, "Well you might know that if a Jew was on the line, he'd be playing *end*." Thus it rested on the small but sturdy frame of Ferd Falender to prove once and for all that a Jew could excel in the most thankless and bruising position of all, right in the muddy midst of the line, where bodies bumped and thrashed and belted one another time after time, like damned souls in some infernal circle not even envisioned by Dante (whose own people were later to prove themselves equal to the Irish and the Poles through the brilliance of Notre Dame quarterbacks such as Frank Carideo and Angelo Bertelli).

Yes, it was Falender who fought his way to varsity status as a sophomore, and earned a berth as first-string guard in the offensive line (the two-platoon system was already in effect, a factor which may be of interest to sociologists studying the interaction implications of sports), and this consistent exhibition of unsung Jewish courage in the middle of the line served to shatter the last lingering doubts of the sincerity as well as the ability of the Jew as athlete. The example was especially dramatic and forceful because of the fact of Falender's size, which was something around 5'4" and 160 pounds, statistics which entitled any man playing that position, regardless of his race, creed, or color, to be described in the sports columns as a "watch-charm guard." I do not know if Falender was the first Jewish watch-charm guard in the history of Indiana High School sports, but at least he was one of the early pioneers, a veritable Brandeis of the Hoosier gridiron.

WHAT IS even more significant and heartening, however, is the situation that I hope will answer the question posed by Richler in his study of the Sherry-Koufax-Drysdale problem. I am happy to report that, even at the risk of endangering his own position in the starting lineup, Falender did befriend and give aid and advice to Billy "Shards" Shardelow, a muscular young WASP who was the most promising guard on the freshman team of 1947, and thus an up-and-coming challenger to Falender's own position. Ferdie and "Shards" became fast friends both on and off the gridiron, and even during the off-season were known to "put on their pads" and spend an afternoon "blocking" one another, a pastime which seems to me indicative of the highest possible devotion to the game, the team, and the spirit of American sports. Ferd schooled "Shards" in all the niceties and complexities of the position, and under this tutelage "Shards" indeed quickly rose to a starting position himself. Either through the good offices of a sporting fate or the shrewd judgment of head mentor George "Windy" Gale, "Shards" did not oust Ferd from the lineup but earned the equivalent position on the *opposite* side of the line, thus giving the Shortridge forward wall a dynamic duo that helped the squad to a position of prominence that reflected further glory on the long and honorable history of Blue Devil football. My point then is that Richler's fears are in vain. I, at least, am convinced personally that if Falender would do it for Shardelow, Sherry would do it for Drysdale.

Just for the record, I might add that Falender ended his grid career by displaying the last full measure of devotion, perhaps symbolic of some all-out final effort to prove beyond the shadow of a doubt the courage of a Jewish lineman. After one particularly bone-crushing play in the last game of the 1949 season, in which, by tradition, Shortridge locks horns with its arch-rival, the Big Green of Tech, Falender was found unconscious at the bottom of a pileup and had to be carried from the field, thus earning the cheer of gratitude that is always rendered on such occasions, a cheer in which every loyal Blue Devil fan surely joined, regardless of race, creed, or color: "Yeah, Rah, Falender—Some Boy!" I would like to feel that at this moment the image of the Jew as athlete in Indianapolis was forever raised beyond the suspicions of prejudice. Happily, Falender's injury was minor, and no reasonable critic could have possibly seen anything but good sense in his decision not to go out for the football team at Indiana

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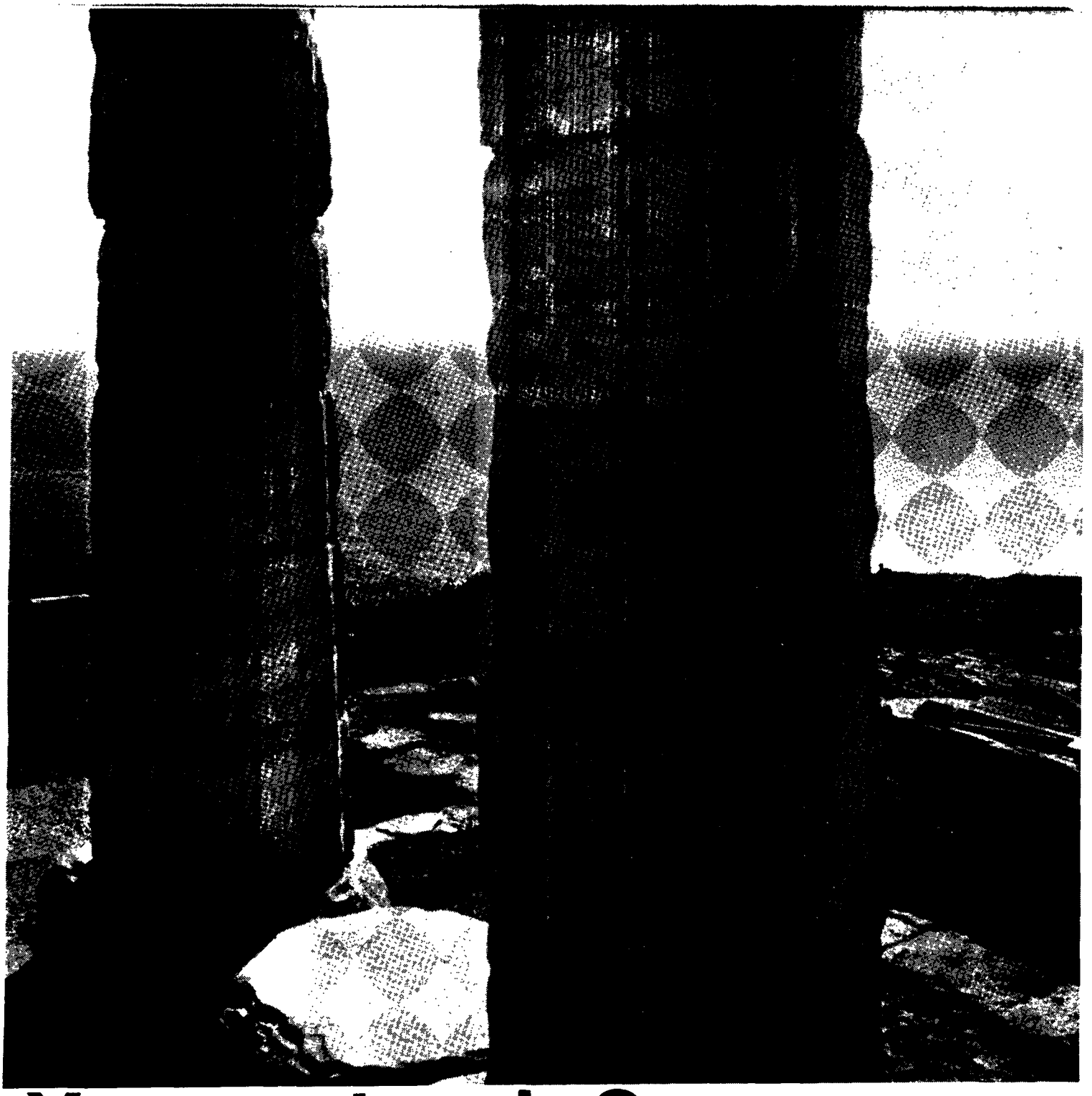

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University, where the mammoth sons of Pennsylvania coal miners were smashing one another with studied diligence and the proportions of a "watch-charm guard" would have probably been something around six feet and 190 pounds. Falender was free to forsake the gridiron and throw himself into his studies without fear of being scorned as a sissy or a "scholar" (the very word, in Big Ten usage, carries a pejorative, if not necessarily anti-Semitic, connotation). Today, he successfully practices dentistry in Indianapolis, and counts among his clients such former Blue Devil teammates as Wardie Walker and Bugsy Surber; I am sure he would also be the chosen caretaker of the dental health of "Shards" Shardelow, were it not for the fact that "Shards" 's business necessitated his moving to Ohio.

ONE FINAL point: perhaps further credit for the general climate of interracial harmony that prevailed on the Blue Devil grid squads of that era should go to the aforementioned Coach Gale, a stern taskmaster in the tradition of Michigan's immortal Fielding H. "Hurry Up" Yost. Head mentor Gale was highly respected for his generalship of the school's gridiron fortunes, but was not, any more than George S. Patton, suspected of any tendencies as a "do-gooder." And yet, one of his most memorable locker-room lines (like Rockne, he was a forceful pre-game and half-time orator) seems to me now an observation on humanity that might well serve more effectively than some of the more flowery slogans of the groups that strive for interracial understanding. This particular comment was delivered in a tension-filled Blue Devil dressing room just before the Shortridge squad was to meet its greatest test of the post-war era, an inter-sectional match with the highly-touted juggernaut carrying the colors of Withrow of Cincinnati, one of the mightiest clubs in the powerful arena of Ohio high school football. Most Indianapolis teams confine themselves to inter-city rivalries on the gridiron, and it is generally felt that this is a matter of prudence, a recognition of the customary "softness" of young athletes raised in the sophisticated decadence of the state's capital city, as compared to the ruggedness of young men bred in the farm or steel-mill areas. The last previous encounter of a Short-

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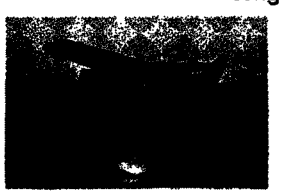

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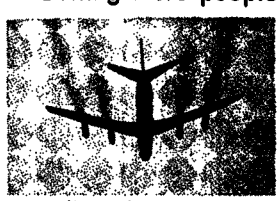

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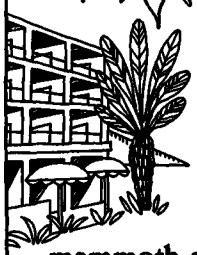

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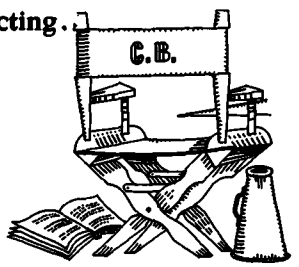

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ridge football team with an "intersectional" rival was a match with one of the steel region squads; I think it was one of the Gary or East Chicago schools, and middle-aged men still remembered with a shiver the horrifying results, which were something on the order of the Chicago Bears' 72-0 massacre of the Washington Redskins in the most lopsided pro-championship game. Tales of this holocaust had been passed down through the years like accounts of Sherman's romp through Georgia, and the young stalwarts of the Shortridge squad bore it in mind as they prepared for their test with the titans from Ohio. Coach Gale obviously knew that his charges were saddled with a psychological burden as well as a physical one in this inter-sectional battle, and it was with this problem in mind that he sought to reassure his legions before they marched out onto the field. Knowing of the myths that had already flourished among the team concerning the fearsome strength of their opponents, Coach Gale, in his booming voice, assured them by saying, "Just remember, men, those guys from Withrow may be tough, but they put their pants on just like you do—one leg at a time." With a roar that I am told included a number of nervous giggles, the Shortridge squad charged onto the field. Although they in fact were beaten—but not by an unrespectable score—I have heard many members of the team quote Coach Gale's observation in later life, and I like to think that it contributed to the general realization of the fact that all men indeed are equal when it comes to such fundamentals as putting on their pants.

DAN WAKEFIELD
Cambridge, Massachusetts

MR. RICHLER writes:

The crucial question is: did Hank Greenberg hold back (possibly for our sake), or was the pressure too much for him? Mr. Adesman, obviously a worldly man, suggests that Greenberg couldn't have held back, because of "the material gain he could have realized" by hitting sixty home-runs. This, it seems to me, is gratuitously attributing coarse motives to an outstanding Jewish sportsman.

Mr. Heft is stunned by my flattering notion that Greenberg might have placed the greater Jewish good above mere athletic records and goes on to nibble at a theory of

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Jewish anti-gamesmanship based on our parents' "running away from pogroms." This theory, clearly unattractive if developed to its logical big league conclusion, would surely have resulted in a more noteworthy Jewish record on the base paths. Mr. Heft is also of the opinion that if Walter Alston keeps a Jewish calendar on his desk it is because he is a good administrator. Yom Kippur, Mr. Heft, comes but once a year, and surely Alston doesn't require a calendar to remind him of one date. If Koufax had also been unwilling to take his turn on the mound on Tisha be'Av or required, say, a *chometz*-free resin bag for the Passover week, then Alston would have had a case. As things stand, the calendar must be reckoned ostentatious.

About Kermit Kitman: I'm afraid his poor hitting had no racial origins, but was a failure all his own, regardless of race, color, or creed. His superb fielding, however, was another matter: a clear case of the overcompensating Jew. Briefly put, Kitman was a notorious *chapper*, a grabber, that is to say any fly ball hit into the outfield had to be *his* fly ball, if you know what I mean.

Mr. Kintisch errs. I admire Koufax enormously and shall miss him sorely this season. He was undoubtedly the greatest pitcher of our time, and yet—and yet—now that he has retired so young is it possible that carping anti-Semites have already begun the whispering campaign: great, yes, but *sickly*. Without the staying power of Warren Spahn. An unnatural athlete.

Jerome Holtzman, a dazzling intellectual asset to the sports department of the Chicago *Sun-Times*, raises darker questions. Greenberg, he says, would never have held back. He "didn't hit 60 because pitchers stopped giving him anything good to hit at—*probably because he was Jewish. . . .*" Now there's something nasty even I didn't think of: the possibility that Bob Feller, Red Ruffing, and others, threw bigoted anti-Semitic curve balls at Hank Greenberg whilst a later generation of American League pitchers fed Roger Maris pro-Gentile pitches. . . . Next season I would implore Holtzman and other Jewish baseball writers to keep a sharp eye on the racial nature of pitches thrown to (or, God forbid, even at) Mike Epstein.

As for *Time*, if it is not anti-Semitic then it is certainly Machiavellian; otherwise, why second-best Juan Marichal on a cover last sum-

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mer when Koufax was also available? Either as a back-of-the-hand to Jewish achievement or as a shameful, possibly Jewish-motivated, attempt to apply the famous *Time* cover jinx to the one Gentile who might have won more games than Koufax.

Ray Robinson endearingly suggests last season was a great one for our Jewish people, but was it? Moe Drabowsky, whom he so readily claims, is in fact only half Jewish. His father is a Pole. Jim Palmer is not even listed in the *Encyclopedia of Jews in Sport,* a compendium which I must accept as all-inclusive if only because a typical entry reads:

> HERTZ, STEVE ALLAN. Infielder. Born Feb. 26, 1945. Dayton, O. Played for Houston 1964. Total Games, 5. Batting Average: .000.

Messrs. Ducovny and Wakefield are another matter. They think I would joke about Jews in sport, which strikes me as presumptuous.

Mr. Ducovny cunningly introduces Willie Davis's three errors behind Koufax in one inning and immediately claims this was a case of Negro anti-Semitism. Not necessarily. It depends on whether Davis dropped the three fly balls in his character as a Negro or in his office as an outfielder. Me, I'm keeping an open mind on the incident.

WITH Dan Wakefield, alas, the argument sinks to an unfortunately devious level. Mr. Wakefield introduces a memoir about the accomplishments of one "Ferdie" Falender of the Blue Devils, seemingly good-natured, ostensibly in the interests of brotherhood. Do the deeper meanings of the Falender story elude Mr. Wakefield? Obviously Falender gave aid and advice to Billy "Shards" Shardelow, a muscular WASP, because he wanted out. The line was getting too rough for a would-be dentist. And who, may I ask, knocked Falender unconscious? Mr. Wakefield, most forthcoming with details on other matters, is mute on this issue. Knocking Falender senseless was, I assume, their way of saying thank you.

On the other hand, Mr. Wakefield is right when he says there is much more research to be done about Jews in sport. Not only Jews, but other minority and out-groups. Allan Roth, *pace* Jerome Holtzman, may border on genius in his field, but though it may seem to

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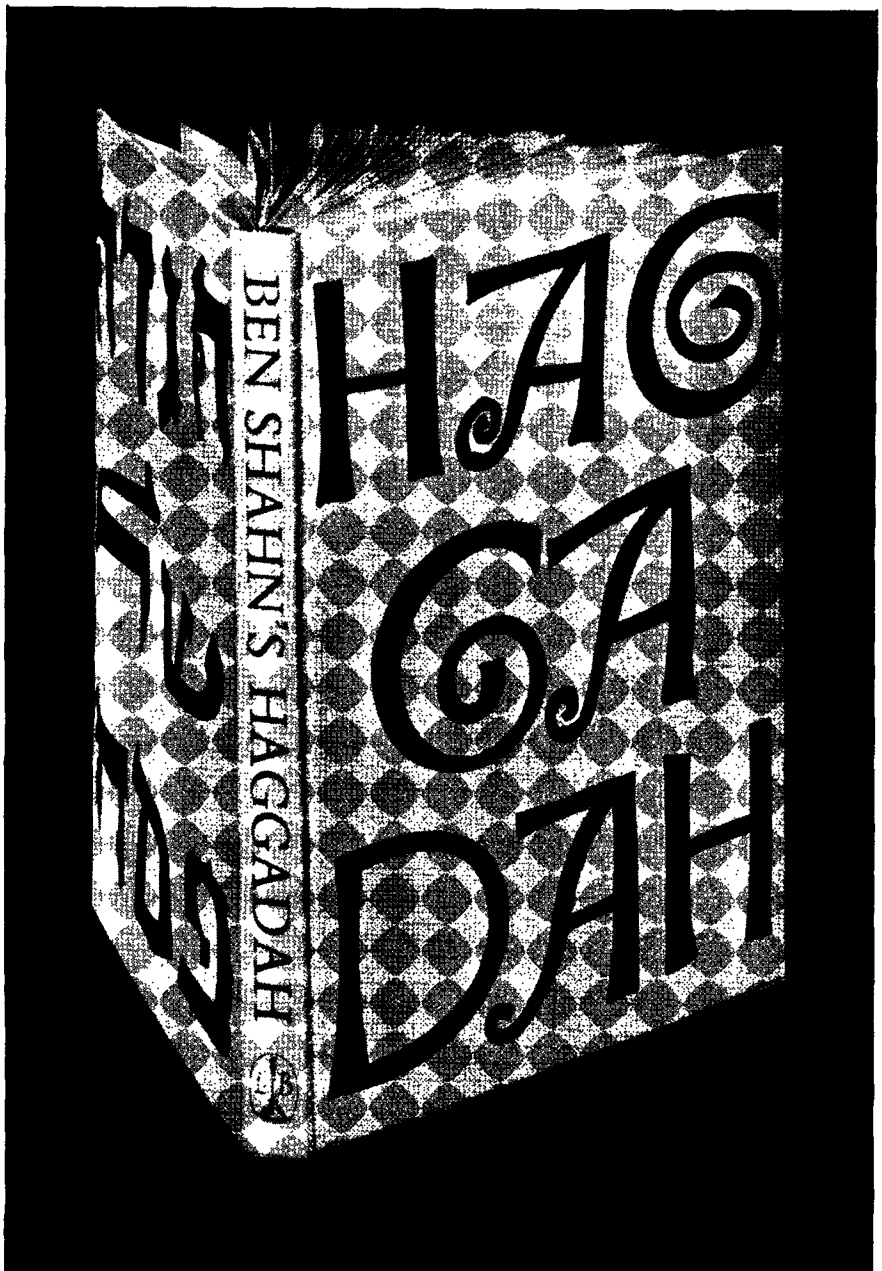

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some fans that baseball is already stifled with statistics, these are only statistics of a certain kind, safe statistics. It has been left to me to establish, haphazardly I admit, the absorbing statistic that homosexuals in both major leagues prefer playing third base over all other positions. As a group, they hit better in night games and are more adroit at trapping line drives than catching flies. They do not, as the prejudiced would have it, tend to be showboats. They are a group with a gripe. A valid gripe. Treated as equals on the field, cheered on by teammates when they hit a homer, they tend to be shunned in the showers. On road trips, they have trouble finding roomies.

Finally, since I wrote my article, so unexpectedly controversial, world events have overtaken journalism.

(1) Sandy Koufax has retired.

(2) Ronald Reagan has been elected governor of California.

(3) Tommy Davis has been traded to the Mets.

(4) Maury Wills has been given, it would seem, to Pittsburgh.

I'm not saying that Ronald Reagan, who in the unhappy past has been obliged to play second-best man again and again for Jewish producers, has been harboring resentments . . . or is behind the incomparable Koufax's departure from California. I'm not saying that image-conscious Governor Reagan, mindful of right-wing support, was against being photographed shaking hands with Captain Maury Wills on opening day. I'm also not saying that after Willie Davis dropped the three flies, Mr. O'Malley turned to one of his minions and said, "Davis belongs with the Mets." Furthermore, I'm not saying that the aforementioned front-office minion could not tell one Davis from another. . . . Just remember, as they said in the sports pages of my boyhood, that you read it here first.

The Inscrutable East

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Peter Schmid . . . writes with the peculiar naivete of so many . . . political observers whose guiding premise is the absolute moral correctness of U.S. political aims and means. ["Letter from Tokyo," October 1966]. Is it not shallow and condescending to explain away opposition to the Vietnam war by a country whose culture is immeasurably older than our own

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with a glib analysis of some mysterious sociological entity—"mood"? Can we not credit those countries who do oppose a horrible war in their part of the world with a certain measure of concern? Instead, we blindly maintain that we are the ones guiding world politics clearheadedly, no matter how blundering we show ourselves to be in a part of the world we are not yet ready to understand or to accept as our equal, as Mr. Schmid's article demonstrates.

DAVID S. MILLER
Quebec, Canada

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . It is difficult to understand how Peter Schmid could characterize the psychological revulsion of the Japanese to warfare as "curious," when, as we all know, Japan was uniquely and devastatingly the victim of the atomic bomb. By way of illustration of this "curious" Japanese attitude, Mr. Schmid then goes on to point out that "When . . . the Korean War necessitated Japan's rearmament, recourse was had to labeling the new army a 'defense force.'"

In this connection, it is worth noting that no nation is *for* war and that an aversion to the words, "military" and "war," is not limited to those who have suffered from either. The caretakers of our nation, which has experienced neither invasion nor bombing, continue to designate the not insignificant sum of almost sixty *billion* dollars in our federal budget as "national defense."

VERA MILLER
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

You printed an obvious falsehood when you allowed Peter Schmid to get by with his tale of zealots in Japan walking on glowing coals, unharmed. . . .

I don't care how mysterious the East may be, people just can't do what Mr. Schmid said they did and not suffer serious injury. A bed of glowing coals is not at all like "a lawn of flowers." I'm sure Mr. Schmid thought it is, but I'm more certain that his information was secondhand. Maybe someone was putting him on. Considering the ironic attitude of the Japanese toward the West, described by Mr. Schmid in his article, it would not surprise me if that was what happened. . . .

ROBERT J. PERRIN
Cambridge, Massachusetts

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THE PRESIDENT & THE NEGRO: THE MOMENT LOST

DANIEL P. MOYNIHAN

FOR ANYONE WITH even a moderate concern for the sources of stability in American government, the results of the 1966 elections will appear on balance a good thing. The Republican party reemerged as a strong and competent force in national life. Republicans now govern half the states of the union, are clearly seen as eligible to assume control of the national government, and increasingly are likely to do so before too many elections have passed.

The liberal Republicans whose successes were most prominent on November 8th do not normally take positions as "advanced" as have recent Democratic Presidents; but then over the years neither have Democratic Congresses, or the nation at large. We have just gone through one of those special periods in the American political cycle of high receptivity to new ideas and new social policies. This period, roughly from November 1963 to November 1966, was a consequence, as James L. Sundquist argues, of two tremendous accidents: the assassination of John F. Kennedy, and the nomination of Barry Goldwater. Much as we will remember the thousand days of Kennedy as a moment of brilliance in American life, it was nonetheless a time of modest legislative achievement. New ideas were conceived, new programs put forth, but the congressional response was cautious and toward the end hostile. At the time of the President's death, his legislative program was in trouble. It was only in the period that followed, in a spasm of remorse, guilt, fear, and something like exultation when what looked like disastrous fate was overcome and transformed indeed into triumph, that attention was turned to the unfinished business of the nation. Not long thereafter, the immense Democratic pluralities in Congress brought about by Goldwater's defeat provided a margin of votes for measures that had been stalemated for years. In three tremendous sessions, Congress cleaned up the agenda of the Roosevelt and Truman eras, while adding a number of important programs conceived in the present era, out of its special problems. The Republican resurgence in part almost certainly reflects a feeling that enough new things are underway for the time being; and there is truth in this. The demand for innovation and experiment has been more than met: a pause is hardly out of order, and with a major war being fought, such a pause was scarcely to be avoided regardless of party balance. In general, the newly elected Republicans are men who have no intention of reversing what progress has been made, nor even of standing still. It is just that the recent period of accelerated, intensive innovation is over.

Few groups in the nation have much to complain about in terms of how they fared during those thirty-six months; few can point to large and clearly formulated expectations that have been left unsatisfied. With one exception. For Negro Americans the election may turn out to have been a calamity. For the second time in their history, the great task of liberation has been left only half-accomplished. It appears that the nation may be in the process of reproducing the tragic events of the Reconstruction: giving to Negroes the forms of legal equality, but withholding the economic and political resources which are the bases of social equality.

The election was not a vote to undo any of the civil-rights advances of the past several years. Indeed, some of the most dramatic outcomes involved the choice of a Republican moderate over a segregationist or even racist Democrat. (Republicans nominated twice as many Negro candidates for the House as did Democrats, who put up only their six incumbents, and of course Republicans nominated and elected a Negro senator.) But the vote was a clear instruction to elected officials everywhere that the country has gone about as far as it wishes in providing social welfare and economic assistance to the Negro masses. The vote, moreover, was a bruising declaration that the electorate is fed up to the teeth with demonstrations and riots and perhaps more particularly with the assertion of the *right* to riot and open threats of violence that have increasingly accompanied even the most routine requests of Negro leaders. The voters think Negroes have received enough for the

DANIEL P. MOYNIHAN, a former Assistant Secretary of Labor, is now director of the Joint Center for Urban Studies of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University. He is the co-author, with Nathan Glazer, of *Beyond the Melting Pot*, and has contributed articles to many magazines, including COMMENTARY. Random House will publish his forthcoming book on the Negro family some time in 1967.

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time being. This was manifest in countless election details, from the popularity of Ronald Reagan's disquisitions on welfare mothers and color television sets, to the startling turnout for the Conservative party in New York and the staggering, near two-to-one defeat of the civilian-dominated police review board by the citizens of New York City.

EVEN BEFORE THE elections this mood had been telegraphed to the Congress, which refused to enact a civil-rights measure in its second session and which in many other ways indicated a withdrawal of sentiment from the Negro cause.

It was unavoidable that some such shift in attitude should have occurred eventually; the tragedy is that it came before the true destiny (if such terms are permitted) of this moment in history was fulfilled. Negroes did get a good deal out of this period. But not enough. They now have enforced legal rights as never in their history, but they remain terribly weak in economic and social terms—a situation that is, if anything, more conspicuous in the face of a booming, full-employment economy now entering its seventh year of unbroken expansion. The basic social legislation and, more importantly, adequate income levels for the Negro poor and the Negro working classes—legislation that would have meant for them what the New Deal measures meant for the population at large—were not enacted. They were, indeed, not even introduced. So long as war persists, economic conditions for Negroes are likely to be tolerable, but peace is more than likely to bring a return to the conditions of, say, the 1950's, conditions which they are no longer willing to accept, but no more than ever, as a group, able to avoid.

The misery is that it did not have to happen. The moment came when, as it were, the nation had the resources, and the leadership, and the will to make a *total* as against a partial commitment to the cause of Negro equality. It did not do so. But it was not Northern conservatives or Southern segregationists who stood in the way. For that one brief moment their opposition would not have prevailed. This time the opposition emanated from the supposed proponents of such a commitment: from Negro leaders unable to comprehend their opportunity; from civil-rights militants, Negro and white, caught up in a frenzy of arrogance and nihilism; and from white liberals unwilling to expend a jot of prestige to do a difficult but dangerous job that had to be done, and could have been done. But was not.

One may be confident that Lyndon Johnson will be blamed for this, and with perhaps especial vehemence inasmuch as more than any man in American public life, and any President in American history, he tried to see that the job did get done. Hence the events that led to his effort, and to its subsequent failure, are worth noting: very likely to no greater purpose than the satisfaction of curiosity, but possibly in some small way as a lesson.

In a pattern that has become familiar for major Presidential initiatives, the effort began with an address to a university audience, in this instance the graduating class of Howard University on June 4, 1965. The timing here was perfect. The President had been overwhelmingly elected the preceding fall, and given the largest majorities in the House and Senate since those of the early Congresses that enacted the New Deal. Johnson had sent up a substantial, if not particularly radical, legislative program which was going along nicely. The one measure that promised to reapportion power in a part of American society, the Voting Rights Bill, was also well on its way to enactment. This latter was but one indication of the extraordinarily favored political position which Negro Americans enjoyed at that moment. The nation was proud, in a way, of having so resoundingly turned back the challenge of the Republican right wing, with its penumbra of reaction and racism. The Negro leaders had acted with great wisdom throughout that episode (and by successfully calling off demonstrations had seemed to evince genuine control of the Negro masses). The events in Selma had been almost a caricature of all that is stupid and intolerable in the South, and again the Negro performance was flawless. These events having in effect taken place on television, there was no longer any doubt that the country understood what things could be like in the South, and was determined to place the power of the federal government behind the protection of Negro civil rights in the region.

For just the reason that things were going so well, this was also the moment of maximum danger. To anyone who troubled to look closely at the situation it was clear that the disabilities of Negroes in the North were far wider and of a different order than those involving the deprivation of civil rights in the rural South. Assuring the franchise to Negroes in the South would help them; abolishing the public forms of segregation would also help them. But none of these measures would make any significant difference in the North, and not even that much in the South where Negroes were hopelessly outnumbered and, given the disparities of wealth and position, in important ways outclassed in the competitive struggle for position and wealth. In the meantime, a Negro proletariat was swelling to the bursting point in the cities of the North, its reach so far exceeding its grasp as to force any but the most indomitably complacent to see that trouble was in the offing.

The demands of Negroes in the South had been traditional, orderly, and unassailable in their justice: American citizens were asking that their constitutional rights be observed. Once the facts became clear, middle-class America agreed—instinctively, automatically. This was about the point —granting the looseness of any historical analogy—

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where things were left after the Civil War: the slaves were emancipated, and that was that. That they might remain penniless and dependent was not an issue touched upon either by John Locke or the American Constitution, and therefore of no concern to government. Just as almost everyone was free in 1863, almost everyone was able to vote a century later. On the other hand, no one had a "right" to own a farm in 1865, and no one had the "right" to hold a job in 1965. Then, as now, going beyond legal entitlements to rights of this kind meant getting involved in large social change —something far more radical than merely eliminating the major inconsistency of the existing system by bringing Negroes into it. Many of the groups now so insistent that the poll tax be abolished and school segregation ended (in the South) would not normally be prepared to support such a change. Moreover, compassion for the suffering, Christlike, non-violent Negro demonstrators of the South was a different thing from loving and understanding the frequently debased and disorderly slum-dwellers of the North. This was a point that anyone who had watched the emergence of "crime-in-the-streets" as a major political issue in New York City would have grasped.

Thus the danger signs were there. Nevertheless, the plain and ascertainable fact was that the nation was going through a moment that had never occurred before—and could not persist indefinitely —in which a willingness to accept a considerable degree of social innovation was combined with genuine feeling for the problems of Negroes. The world was at peace. The President had enormous majorities in Congress. The success of the New Economics was by then manifest: the Bureau of the Budget was already forecasting a $45 billion increase in the level of federal revenues by 1970—an increase, further, which doctrine ordained had to be spent in order to accrue. It was, in addition, a moment of racial calm. No demonstrators were abroad, no confrontation between white power and black protest was building up anywhere. In this atmosphere of maximum reasonableness and calm, an atmosphere in which the President could without great risk do nothing, and which for that very reason provided an opportunity for history to be made, the President, seizing the opportunity, set in motion a major initiative.

He went before an audience of fourteen-thousand persons on hand for the graduating ceremonies at Howard University and made the most advanced commitment to the cause of Negro equality of any President in history. Citing Churchill, he declared that the soon-to-be-enacted Voting Rights Bill, generally deemed at the time the ultimate in civil-rights achievement, was "not the end . . . not even the beginning of the end . . . perhaps the end of the beginning." Once again Negroes were being given their freedom, but, said the President:

> . . . freedom is not enough. You do not wipe away the scars of centuries by saying: Now you are free to go where you want, do as you desire; choose the leaders you please.
>
> You do not take a person who for years has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line of a race and then say, "You are free to compete with all the others," and still justly believe that you have been completely fair.
>
> Thus it is not enough just to open the gates of opportunity. All our citizens must have the ability to walk through those gates.

For many Negroes there had been great progress, the President continued (speaking in a setting that made that clear enough). "But for the great majority of Negro Americans—the poor, the unemployed, the uprooted and the dispossessed—there is a much grimmer story. They still are another nation. Despite the court order and the laws, despite the legislative victories and the speeches, for them the walls are rising and the gulf is widening." He went on to recount the facts of this widening gulf, and to insist that "Negro poverty is not white poverty"—the past had been too brutal, the present too distorted, racial prejudice too real for any useful analogy. The disadvantages of the Negro had become "a seamless web. They cause each other, they result from each other. They reinforce each other."

To argue this point, the President then turned to a subject never before mentioned by an American President, never before an acknowledged issue of public concern: the condition of the Negro family, the central fact and symbol of the "one huge wrong of the American nation," a condition that had vastly improved for some, but which remained anguished for many:

> For this, most of all, white America must accept responsibility. It flows from centuries of oppression and persecution of the Negro man. It flows from long years of degradation and discrimination, which have attacked his dignity and assaulted his ability to provide for his family.
>
> This, too, is not pleasant to look upon. But it must be faced by those whose serious intent is to improve the life of all Americans.
>
> Only a minority—less than half—of all Negro children reach the age of eighteen having lived all their lives with both of their parents. At this moment a little less than two-thirds are living with both of their parents. Probably a majority of all Negro children receive federally aided public assistance sometime during their childhood.
>
> The family is the cornerstone of our society. More than any other force it shapes the attitude, the hopes, the ambitions, and the values of the child. When the family collapses it is the children that are usually damaged. When it happens on a massive scale the community itself is crippled.
>
> So, unless we work to strengthen the family, to create conditions under which most parents will stay together—all the rest: schools and play-

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grounds, public assistance and private concern, will never be enough to cut completely the circle of despair and deprivation.

The President proposed "no single easy answer." Some measures were obvious enough: jobs that enable a man to support his family, decent housing, welfare programs better designed to hold families together, health care, compassion. "But there are other answers still to be found." To seek them out, he announced, he would convene in the fall a White House Conference of scholars and experts, outstanding Negro leaders and government officials. Its theme would be "To Fulfill These Rights," a phrase echoing the great assertion of the Declaration of Independence. And he dedicated his administration to this epic undertaking:

> To move beyond opportunity to achievement. To shatter forever not only the barriers of law and public practice, but the walls which bound the condition of man to the color of his skin.
>
> This is the next and more profound stage of the battle for civil rights. We seek not just freedom but opportunity—not just legal equity but human ability—not just equality as a right and a theory, but equality as a fact and as a result.

His audience was not in the least prepared for such a speech, nor was the press. The first accounts were routine enough: the President had promised equality, the ovation was "stunning," he had received an honorary degree. A Gemini flight was the big news of the moment. But over the weekend the reporters thought again and began to assess what they had heard. Douglas Kiker described it in terms of the reaction of an audience "accustomed to hearing national political leaders speak in traditional ways about civil rights":

> At first they applauded the traditional lines. Then they sat in stunned silence. And finally they applauded out of shock and self-identification.
>
> Mr. Johnson . . . [spoke] as no President ever has spoken before, but as a result it is doubtful that any future, serious discussion of the problem can be attempted without consideration of what he said.

Tom Wicker described the speech in terms of the Supreme Court decision on school segregation:

> At Howard University . . . Mr. Johnson laid down much the same principle on a much broader scale.
>
> Providing for the Negro an equal "right" to vote, to get a job, to go to unsegregated schools, to due process of law, Mr. Johnson was really saying, is providing him with no more than "separate but equal" citizenship. And just as had been true in education, so it is true in the broader view that "separate" is inherently "unequal."
>
> Thus did President Johnson face squarely what must be ranked as the most difficult problem in American life. That problem is not the enforcing of legal equity for the Negro. It is rather the acceptance of the Negro as an equal human being rather than a "separate but equal" human being—a man with a darker skin rather than a "black man."

It was a bold beginning. The speech seemed to attract more attention as time passed, and indeed is almost certain to find a place in the history of Presidential papers. Yet before half-a-year had passed the initiative was in ruins, and after a year-and-a-half it is settled that nothing whatever came of it.

WHY? The reasons vary. Within weeks of the speech the President was caught up in the series of decisions that led to the large-scale introduction of ground forces into Vietnam later that summer. The address at Howard was in a sense his last peacetime speech. Thereafter, one would assume, his mind was increasingly preoccupied with war in Asia. This did not entail any backtracking on the commitment "To Fulfill These Rights," but it did mean that the White House was not going to think up a program to do so. The energies of that tiny group at the apex of government were now directed elsewhere. If a program was to be forthcoming, it would have to be the work of the civil-rights movement, with whatever assistance it could muster in government departments and universities. There was no reason to assume that the movement would fail in this, but in fact it did so: totally. The civil-rights movement had no program for going beyond the traditional and relatively easy issues of segregation and discrimination, and could not organize itself to produce one within the life of the 89th Congress. And in any event it did not do so because it allowed the question of developing a program to be superseded by a preposterous and fruitless controversy over a Department of Labor report which had been the original precipitant of the Howard speech.

The report was entitled *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*. It was written by me (I was then Assistant Secretary of Labor for Policy Planning and Research), with the assistance of Paul Barton and Ellen Broderick of the Policy Planning Staff. It was an internal document entirely: intended for the Secretary of Labor, the President, and the members of their staffs who would accept or reject its proposals and implications. A hundred copies were produced, but with no expectation of using even that few. The objectives of the report were twofold. First: to argue the need for seizing the opportunity of the moment to make the kind of commitment the President did in fact subsequently make. Second: to urge consideration of a new and different kind of policy, *in addition to* the more familiar ones—namely, a national family policy.

A word about these objectives: traditionally, the American legal and constitutional system has been based on a deliberate blindness to any social reality other than the reality of individuals. De-

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riving partly from the metaphysics of classical liberalism, and partly from the relative ethnic homogeneity of American society before the Civil War, this emphasis has been a source of much vitality and initiative, but also an obstacle to the entry of a number of groups into a full sharing of the rewards of American life. It was simply not enough, as Anatole France observed, that the law in its majestic equality should forbid the rich equally with the poor to sleep under bridges and to beg bread in the streets. The reality of class had to be acknowledged, for example, in order for the labor movement to make the gains it did under the New Deal. But if this understanding of the Negro in group terms has been widespread enough among scholars, it has not been a consideration in the framing of programs. The report on the Negro family was intended to demonstrate its relevance and thereby to persuade the government that public policy must now concern itself with issues beyond the frame of individualistic political thinking.

The second objective was connected with and flowed from the first. Family is not a subject Americans tend to consider appropriate as an area of public policy. Family affairs are private. For that very reason, to raise the subject in terms of public policy is to arouse immediate interest: edged with apprehension, but interest nonetheless. That was the simple purpose of the report: to win the attention of those in power. The government no less—in fact, more—than the nation at large was caught up in the euphoria and sense of achievement of the moment. This was, after all, an administration of Texans who could hardly help exaggerating the importance of the dismantling of the segregationist social structure that had been the shame and the burden of the South for so long. It was necessary to depict, and in terms that would be felt as well as understood, the internal weakness of the Negro community and the need for immense federal efforts if that community was to go beyond opportunity "to equality as a fact and as a result." Another discourse on unemployment, on housing, on health would not have accomplished this. It would have added little to what persons thought they generally knew. In any event, unemployment was going down, housing was by any criteria improving, health standards were higher than ever. Yet social indicators such as these are relative, while family in a sense remains an absolute: a broken family is broken; a deserted wife is alone; an abandoned child needs help. Describing the plight of so many Negro families appeared the surest way to bring home the reality of their need. And, should the argument carry within the administration and be extended beyond, it seemed that programs aimed at the family might hope to enlist the support of the more conservative and tradition-oriented centers of power in American life whose enthusiasm for class legislation is limited indeed. To do anything for Negro families would entail assisting the entire population. Certain groups might be hesitant at first, but if the European or Canadian experience was any guide, such programs could quickly become a matter of solid consensus.

However little explored as a subject of public policy, the question of the Negro family has been perhaps the central subject of Negro scholarship in America. The first and in ways the best book, now forgotten, was written by W. E. B. DuBois in 1908, under the title, *The Negro American Family*. A generation later, E. Franklin Frazier published his classic work, *The Negro Family in the United States*. A number of others have contributed important studies since. The destruction of the family under the form of capitalist slavery practiced in the American South was, after all, the unique experience of the Negro American. It was the supreme fact of bondage and, if one likes, the unredeemable sin of the slaveholders. The gradual formation of families by freedmen before emancipation and others thereafter was a central element in the great transformation of the Negro people, but while eminently successful for some, it was slow and painful for many, and from the beginning, Negro families have been exposed to every variety of internal travail and external pounding. Frazier ended his work, which appeared in 1939, on an ominous note. The uprooted, marginal, Southern peasants were then moving To the City of Destruction. "The travail of civilization," he wrote, "is not yet ended."

> First, it appears that the family which evolved within the isolated world of the Negro folk will become increasingly disorganized. Modern means of communication will break down the isolation of the world of black folk, and, as long as the bankrupt system of Southern agriculture exists, Negro families will continue to seek a living in the towns and cities of the country. They will crowd the slum areas of Southern cities or make their way to Northern cities where their family life will become disrupted and their poverty will force them to depend upon charity.

THE PLAN OF the Labor Department report was to pick up from Frazier and record what had happened. As the data were assembled—data which had not previously been brought together—a compelling hypothesis began to emerge: *Frazier had been right*. It could not be described as a conclusion, since the information was not that solid, but the impression arose that the Negro community might be dividing. A middle class was clearly consolidating and growing, and yet the overall indicators continued to worsen, not precipitously but steadily. These two things could not be true unless a third fact—that things were falling apart at the bottom—was also true. And that meant trouble in the Northern slums.

The last point is essential to understanding the initial impact of the report and later the reaction

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to it. The kind of female-headed, female-based family now so common in Negro slums is nothing new. It has been and in places remains a commonplace feature of lower-class life in industrial societies. The Negro experience may be a particularly intensive one, but San Juan and Copenhagen, Glasgow and Dublin have or have had their counterparts. Further, it has its equivalents in primitive societies. In the view of a wide range of anthropologists and sociologists and, of course, of psychiatrists, these families and the communities they make up tend to transmit from one generation to the next, traits and circumstances which help perpetuate their condition. There is nothing absolute about this: as many individuals, no doubt, leave the culture as remain in it, and on one level the proposition amounts to little more than the assertion that the poor rarely inherit large estates. But anyone who has lived in or near the condition knows it to be real. The dissolution, the carelessness, the matriarchy, the violence, the "protest masculinity" are all there. The "massive deterioration of the fabric of society and its institutions," in Kenneth Clark's phrase, sets in and children get caught up in the "tangle of pathology" early. In any event, if, as Kennedy used to say, to govern is to choose, to advise those who govern is to choose positions and press them, and I pressed this one.

The report began: "The United States is approaching a new crisis in race relations." An opening section, "The End of the Beginning," proposed that the Negro demands for liberty in the South would now be met regardless of sporadic opposition, and that the nation must now turn to the issue of equality. On that issue no similar consensus existed. Yet mere equality of opportunity would not be sufficient, for in present terms Negroes were simply not competitive. "The principal challenge of the next phase of the Negro revolution is to make certain that equality of results will now follow. If we do not, there will be no social peace in the United States for generations."

With the warning: "Data are few and uncertain, and conclusions drawn from them, including the conclusions that follow, are subject to the grossest error," the report went on to declare that "At the heart of the deterioration of the fabric of Negro society is the deterioration of the Negro family." A combination of charts and text illustrated the way in which unemployment, in particular, had controlled family stability and welfare dependency, with the latter rising and falling in response to the non-white male unemployment rate, and the prevalence of broken families rising with the long-term rise in unemployment. But then in the 60's employment began to improve, but family conditions did not. *The possibility was real that the situation had begun feeding on itself.* The large number of children born to lower- and working-class Negro parents, combined with the low skills of Negro workers and the sluggishness of the wage structure, argued most powerfully that even full employment would not provide the economic stability that was clearly the basis of family stability for this group. (There are other groups with different traditions—Appalachian miners, for instance—who can take a lot of punishment without much impact on family structure. But urban Negroes cannot, and that is really all there is to it.) The report concluded that a new and vast national effort was required to enhance "the stability and resources of the Negro American family."

A series of recommendations was at first included, then left out. It would have got in the way of the attention-arousing argument that a crisis was coming and that family stability was the best measure of success or failure in dealing with it. The program response was anyhow obvious enough: guaranteed full employment, birth control, adoption services, etc. *But first of all a family allowance.* The United States is the only industrial democracy in the world without a system of automatic income supplements for people living with their children. It is the simplest and possibly the most effective of all social-welfare arrangements, not least because its administration involves no judgments as to whether or not the recipients are worthy and entitled to assistance. If the children are alive, the allowance is paid. The United States has, of course, a family allowance for *broken* families, the AFDC program. It was past time we came to our senses on the subject, and stopped penalizing families with a father in the home. In that far-off spring of 1965 it appeared we might. It was absurd to think that such a precious moment of legislative opportunity would pass without some measure of income redistribution. A family allowance was surely the most promising candidate. It would have cost $5 to $10 billion per year according to the scheme adopted *but we had the money.* To have enacted it would have been a first step in the necessary movement from the "civil-rights" phase—the phase involving legal equality for Negroes—into the phase of "equality as a fact and as a result."

The report was sent to the President by Secretary of Labor Wirtz on May 4th, along with a nine-point program. On May 30th, the White House asked for a draft of a speech at Howard to put forward its thesis. On the night of June 3rd, the draft was rewritten and after being read in the morning to Roy Wilkins, Whitney Young, and Martin Luther King, was delivered without further ado that afternoon.

LEE RAINWATER and William L. Yancey have written a book about the controversy that ensued* and much that here follows draws on them. Predictably, albeit unbeknown to the White

* *The Moynihan Report and the Politics of Controversy*, M.I.T. Press (forthcoming).

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House, trouble began within the permanent government, as Arthur Schlesinger Jr. calls the civil-service bureaucracies. The report and the speech were wholly the product of the Presidential government. The welfare bureaucracy knew nothing of either, but as closer inquiry put the two together it was instantly perceived that the adequacy of the welfare bureaucracy's efforts and even the integrity of its view of events had been roundly condemned. The civil service is in an untenable position in this area: they know well enough the inadequacy of the programs they administer, and the ways in which Negroes are discriminated against even within the context of inadequate programs. Rainwater and Yancey write:

> Over many years one of the most important ways of coping with this difficult situation has been to try to fuzz it over. Under the guise of civil libertarian reasoning, welfare organizations, both national and local, have tried to "wish away" race as a category, and this has had the latent function of concealing the extent to which discrimination continues. One of the early civil-rights activities of the Kennedy administration was to try to reverse this trend so that at least the government could be informed about the extent to which Negroes were disadvantaged. Having this "color blind" point of view built into their ideology, it was relatively easy for welfare personnel to find Moynihan's intransigent emphasis on color reactionary rather than radical.

Word began to flow forth from the recesses of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare that I was a "subtle racist," that the Negro people had been insulted, and further that the facts were wrong. The Children's Bureau awoke from its torpor to join this effort with singularly feline earnestness.

For the record let it be said that such new information as has come to light since the report was written has substantially confirmed the thesis that the prevalence of family disruption among lower-class Negroes has been on the increase. The weakest statistic in the report had to do with the actual proportion of female-headed non-white families, which had increased only from 18 per cent in 1950 to 21 per cent in 1960. It happens that in March 1965, the month the report was finished, another census was being taken which showed the proportion of female-headed Negro families to have increased to 25 per cent—a sharp acceleration. This is the prevalence at the moment; the incidence over time is, of course, much higher. Probably not much more than a quarter of lower-class Negro children live with both parents during their entire youths. There are more broken families and they are breaking up earlier. Analyzing the non-white data in a paper delivered last summer, Daniel O. Price reported that 1970 will see "significant increases in the percent married with spouse absent. These increases are doubtless related to many factors such as increased urbanization, lack of economic opportunities for non-white males, welfare programs that reduce the financial strains on many female-headed households, differential cultural values, etc."

The white/non-white differential in marriage stability seems to hold at all economic and social levels, but the recent deterioration is clearly concentrated at the lowest ones. In Watts, for example, the proportion of children under 18 living with both parents dropped from 56 per cent in 1960, which was nothing to brag about, to 44 per cent in 1965. Most strikingly, family income levels have also been dropping in these areas. Between 1960 and 1965, family income in America rose 14 per cent. *Non-white* family income rose 24 per cent. But in South Los Angeles, it declined 8 per cent, from $5,122 to $4,736 in constant dollars. The Negro community in that area was going through a serious increase in disorganization; this was not, however, happening to the Mexican American community alongside them in East Los Angeles. In the Hough section of Cleveland, a similar process was underway. In 1959, family income there was $4,732; by 1964, this had dropped to $3,966, a decline almost entirely accounted for by the increase in female-headed households, which rose from 22.5 per cent in 1960 to 32.1 per cent in 1966.

It is plain enough that anyone seeking to discredit a political initiative based on as sensitive a subject as family structure, particularly that of Negroes, will have no difficulty devising arguments. For generations, Negroes have labored under the attribution of genetic inferiority; to raise the question of a "deviant subculture" is to invite the charge of raising the same old canard of innate differences in a more respectable guise. The subject of family introduces the subject of sex, in this instance Negro sex, an issue of intense and not always acknowledged sensitivity for all parties. The subject of broken families raises the specter of welfare cheating charges, an issue to which Newburgh, New York, gave its name, but which Governor Reagan has brought to a point of high political style. Further, Negro leaders and activists are apt themselves to come from the most solid, even rigid family backgrounds and probably have real difficulty perceiving or acknowledging the realities of lower-class life. And so on, down a long list of reasons, any one of which is sufficient to explain why, even when the subject is broached, as in the Howard speech, it barely makes its way into the press accounts, being an issue, as the *Economist* noted at the time, that liberals prefer to "skirt."

THE ATTACK, as is usual in such cases, came from the outside, in the form of a paper prepared early in the fall by a member of CORE, William Ryan (not the Manhattan congressman) and published in the *Nation*. Ryan, a psycholo-

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gist, was a consultant to the Massachusetts Committee on Children and Youth, whose head is a former director of the Children's Bureau. He charged the report with providing grounds for a massive white "cop out" by means of "a new form of subtle racism that might be termed 'Savage Discovery,' and seduces the reader into believing that it is not racism and discrimination but the weaknesses and defects of the Negro himself that account for the present status of inequality. . . ." One recalls the character in a Disraeli novel said to have been "distinguished for ignorance, in that he had but one idea and that was wrong." Ryan's one idea was that I was obsessed with illegitimacy; I should never have raised the subject, he said, and moreover was inaccurate in my facts. He may have been right about the first allegation, but he was wrong about the statistics. For illegitimacy—which Myrdal judged the best measure of family stability—*is* a serious problem for Negroes (and increasingly for whites as well). A quarter of all non-white births and almost half of first births (and in one large city for which data are available, near to two-thirds of first births) are out of wedlock. The illegitimate first child (the non-white rate rose from 39.5 per cent in 1955 to 47.4 per cent in 1964)) seems a particularly poignant problem, as it almost certainly decimates the bargaining power of a young Negro girl with the world around her. Illegitimacy is a painful subject, but one is surprised in this age of the Foul Speech Movement to find that it is also thought to be a dirty word.

Thomas Pettigrew, of Harvard University, author of *Profile of the Negro American*, wrote the editor of the *Nation* describing the Ryan article as "trash . . . replete with errors and written by a man with no past experience in race relations. . . ." But it was widely distributed within the civil-rights movement and seemingly accepted as truth. At the year's end it was reprinted in *Crisis*, the official organ of the NAACP, under the title, "The New Genteel Racism."

The article was a blow to the Howard initiative, but not yet a deadly one. Roy Wilkins wrote to say he had not known the NAACP was reprinting it: "My opinion of the Ryan piece and of similar reasoning is well known to my immediate associate here. . . . It is a silly and sinister distortion to classify as racist this inevitable discussion of a recognized phase of our so-called race problem." Wilkins's attitude was shared by other Negro leaders. During the summer, Whitney Young, Jr. several times noted, properly, that he had for years been writing about just such questions. In October in a speech in Westchester, Martin Luther King, Jr. summed up a general position:

> As public awareness [of the breakdown of the Negro family] increases there will be dangers and opportunities. The opportunity will be to deal fully rather than haphazardly with the problem as a whole—to see it as a social catastrophe and meet it as other disasters are met, with an adequacy of resources. The danger will be that problems will be attributed to innate Negro weaknesses and used to justify neglect and rationalize oppression.

Just so. The Howard speech was playing for high stakes.

THE FACT was that the civil-rights movement was beginning to think in these terms. The President of a new Asian nation once remarked to an American Assistant Secretary of State that his predecessor, the first President, had had a glorious job. "He had only to go about the country shouting, 'Freedom!' For me it's different. For me it's all arithmetic." Just such a day was approaching for the Negro leaders. On April 3, 1965, in a staff memorandum entitled "Suggested Guidelines for Future Organizational Expansion," James Farmer, then the national head of CORE, had opened the subject: "In the past," he wrote, "any talk of upgrading and improving the Negro community would immediately have been labeled anti-integrationist, separationist, reactionary, and lending grist to the mill of those who cry, 'Not Ready Yet.' But even if such accusations come from thoughtless quarters, we must not delay motion in this direction."

In other circumstances, the Howard speech and even the report might have served to give direction to this developing attitude. Yet just the opposite occurred. The reasons are no doubt many, but an important one seems to have been the war in Vietnam. The political Left that had been associated with and indeed was part of the movement now began turning on the President and all his works. Thus, *Ramparts* published an editorial written by Marcus Raskin, evincing great concern that I seemed to think more Negroes should be in the armed forces (I do); and indicting me further as a lackey of the "social welfare monopoly—with its cop and spying attributes" that now proposed to force decent proletarian Negroes to live like the white bourgeoisie and to "torture" them with birth control. I had become a most suspect person indeed in the ranks of SNCC and CORE, and the Presidential initiative suffered accordingly.

The real blow was Watts. It threw the civil-rights movement entirely off balance. Until then, theirs had been the aggrieved, the just, the righteous cause. In the South an old game had been going on with a new rule, imperfectly understood by whites, that the first side to resort to violence—lost. Now in the North the Negroes had resorted to violence, in a wild destructive explosion that shattered, probably forever, the image of nonviolent suffering. And within hours of the signing of the Voting Rights Act. The same new rule applied. The civil-rights movement could not explain Watts, and could not justify it. Then, of a sudden, the report on the Negro family was being used to do so. Watts made the report a public issue,

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and gave it a name. Or rather the columnists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak did in their column of August 18, which began:

> Weeks before the Negro ghetto of Los Angeles erupted in violence, intense debate over how to handle such racial powder kegs was under way deep inside the Johnson administration.
>
> The pivot of this debate: the Moynihan report, a much suppressed, much leaked Labor Department document that strips away usual equivocations and exposes the ugly truth about the big-city Negro's plight.

The report, said they, had raised, as indeed it had, the explosive question of preferential treatment, "a solution far afield from the American dream."

I HAD BY this time left Washington for New York politics and was not at all involved with what was then going on in the capital, but it does appear that after Watts the report gained notoriety as an explanation of the internal problems revealed by the riots, and in that measure angered and repelled just those Negro leaders who had been on the point of turning to just such problems. Before long I was being denounced, for example, by James Farmer, in terms not at all consistent with his staff memorandum of April 3: "We are sick unto death," he wrote in a syndicated column, "of being analyzed, mesmerized, bought, sold, and slobbered over. . . . Moynihan has provided a massive academic copout for the white conscience and clearly implied that Negroes in this nation will never secure a substantial measure of freedom until we stop sleeping with our wife's sister and buying Cadillacs instead of bread. . . . Nowhere does Moynihan suggest that the proper answer to a shattered family is an open job market where the 'frustrated' Negro male can get an honest day's work." (The gist of the report was, if I may, that full employment, while indispensable, was no longer enough.)

Watts also threw off the White House, which found the moment for the conference "To Fulfill These Rights" almost upon it, but with no adequate preparations for a full-scale meeting. It was decided to hold first a small planning session. This met in November in an atmosphere of near frenzy over the report, which was all the militants seemed able to think of: indeed, at one of the plenary sessions the secretary to the conference felt called on to announce, "There is no such person as *Daniel P. Moynihan.*" The conference was in truth a shambles; in the aftermath, one Chicago militant declared it had been entirely too much dominated by "whites and Jews," and from within the administration came the verdict: "A disaster." Rainwater and Yancey found one "close observer of Washington civil-rights events" who saw behind it all the "benign Machiavellianism" of Lyndon Johnson. They themselves suggest that "failure to treat the conference as the important event it had first seemed served several functions. First of all, it strongly disorganized the civil-rights forces who in the end managed to bring about a show of unity only in opposition to the Moynihan report, *not in effective demands on the administration.*" But this kind of calculation is rarer in government than those outside tend to suppose. The essential fact is that neither the government nor the civil-rights movement had the resources to prepare a program in response to the Howard speech. This was the point of unparalleled opportunity for the liberal community and it was exactly the point where that community collapsed.

The collapse had been presaged just before the planning session met in November. A "Pre-White House Conference on Civil Rights" was convened in New York by the Office of Church and Race of the Protestant Council in cooperation with the Commission on Religion and Race of the National Council of Churches. A distinguished group of religious leaders, including Catholics and Jews and a scattering of liberal professors, was in attendance. The key figures were Dr. Robert Spike, Executive Director of the Commission on Religion and Race which had been established in 1963 in the midst of the Birmingham crisis, and Dr. Benjamin F. Payton, a young Negro sociologist and minister, then with the New York Protestant Council, and who a month later succeeded Spike in the national post. The larger purpose of the meeting was to propose that an "Economic Development Budget for Equal Rights in America," to cost $32 billion per year, be placed on the agenda of the White House Conference. But the real heat of the gathering was in the demand "that the question of 'family stability' be stricken entirely from that agenda. . . ."

This demand was supported by a paper written by Dr. Payton analyzing the report. It had already, he said, "had an impact upon the civil-rights movement and upon more general American politics that is quite deadening and utterly misleading." At the outset of a confused and confusing document, he seemed to suggest that the report had been written to explain Watts:

> Based largely upon Bureau of Census statistics, it summarizes very incomplete data in the form of some highly questionable conclusions, the most important of which are: (1) Since unemployment in general is decreasing in America, the riots breaking out in cities across the land cannot be positively associated with lack of jobs on the part of Negroes; (2) The major causal factor behind the riots, therefore, cannot be associated with *present and continuing* discrimination, or with an inadequate supply of job-training. . . .

Dr. Payton's main assertion was that the report had declared that the employment and income gap between Negroes and whites was closing (where, in fact, the report had said exactly the opposite). Also bewildering was the end of the paper where,

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describing the President in Neustadtian terms as "the Great Initiator" who may not wait for information to make its way through the labyrinthine corridors of Washington offices, but rather must reach out for it "at the level of detail," Dr. Payton concluded:

> That President Johnson reached to significant social experts for the [Howard speech] . . . is evident from the quality of the speech. . . . The President sketched, in broad outline, an approach to the question of civil rights that promised to lift the whole issue to a new level of discussion, and provide a more meaningful framework within which action might be planned for its resolution. Pointing to the complex interrelationship among social and economic factors to the achievement of meaningful constitutional rights, Johnson became the first Chief Executive to maintain intact the issues pertaining purely to *racial* justice, and at the same time, to connect those issues with a category broader than the somewhat misleading genus of "race-relations"; hence giving them an adequate context.
>
> With an impressive array of technical data, shaped by imaginative ethical insight into an instrument of incisive social analysis, the speech provided a devastatingly clear rationale of why, at precisely the moment when unprecedented rights for the Negro are being secured by law, the nation needs to make a new departure if those rights are to become something more than mere ideal possibilities.

That the speech had had a direct relation to the report he seemed not to know, and the whole matter became even more curious two weeks later when I met Dr. Payton and he informed me that his paper was really an attack on President Johnson but that he had named me for "strategical purposes."

IN TRUTH, the Payton paper bordered on the psychopathological. (Although perhaps not: it was broadcast by the hundreds at the time, and achieved its objective brilliantly. But when Rainwater and Yancey recently asked to reproduce it in their book, Payton declined.) Charles M. Silberman, author of *Crisis in Black and White*, called it "the most blatant distortion that I can remember seeing in a long time." In a letter to a Presbyterian minister he wrote:

> Moynihan's whole emphasis is on the crucial role of unemployment in understanding all of the problems of Negro pathology; he presents one statistical correlation after another, showing that illegitimacy, desertion, and all the other symptoms show an unbelievably high correlation with changes in Negro unemployment; he marshals an enormous amount of evidence demonstrating—completely contrary to Payton's allegations throughout his essay—that Negro unemployment is very much more serious than the unemployment statistics indicate.

And so on. The Presidential assistant most directly responsible for civil-rights matters, a devout Protestant layman, described Payton's paper as "the apotheosis of the big lie." But somehow a nerve had been touched in Liberal Protestantism and there was no undoing the effects. Given the national prominence and the position of the persons who convened the Payton-Spike meeting, and given the absence of any protest or correction from within the church community, it had to be taken as the voice of American Protestantism. The issue of the Negro family was dead.

The plans for the November session were already fixed when the New York meeting took place, so that in fact one of the eight panels which met in Washington was on "The Family: Resources for Change." Chaired by Constance Baker Motley, it was a lively and useful session, on a subject that had not been talked to death. The panel report calling for the establishment of a national family policy might have been an important document, had it not been for the Payton-Spike intervention. But in February, the President appointed a thirty-member group to organize the White House Conference "To Fulfill These Rights." Reverend Spike was put on this Council and the subject of family—raised by an accused and thereby half-convicted "crypto-racist"—was taken off the agenda. The Department of Labor, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and the Office of Economic Opportunity set to work destroying all traces of the original policy, while producing tract on tract to demonstrate that what the President had said at Howard University was not so. The White House dissociated itself from the report and the subject. Order was restored, and soon the old orthodoxies were securely back in place: the problems of Negroes derived from the behavior of whites, and laws would change that behavior. A civil-rights message was sent to Congress proposing a ban on discrimination in housing in about the terms Governor Dewey used to address the New York State legislature in the 1940's.

The Conference, when it met, was a lifeless affair. The Council submitted a long report of unflinching orthodoxy, that missed entirely the import of the Howard speech. It reflected throughout what Rainwater has called "the services strategy," as against an income strategy in dealing with problems of poverty. Thus, the section on public welfare proposed, "There should be a sharp reduction of the number of clients served by each case worker." This is a common enough American approach to social problems, but there is perhaps a special significance in this particular area: a quite disproportionate number of middle-class Negroes, and of whites involved in civil-rights activities, are themselves members of the service professions. It is too much to expect that such persons will be oblivious to the advantages that might accrue to them from bidding up the demand for their services. A more cynical person might describe the strategy as one of feeding the sparrows by feeding

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the horses. The Education section proposed that public expenditure per pupil be increased from $532 to $1000. This would reflect an increase of tax outlay per Negro family of $1404, or 37.5 per cent of average Negro family income. But almost every last penny of this increase would go to middle-class persons whose salaries are already well above the poverty level. The thought of giving the money directly to the Negro family in the form of a family allowance is not even suggested in the report, a document in any event destined for instant obscurity. The delegates were bored from the outset, and contented themselves with passing resolutions of no greater political realism than the report itself: "That J. Edgar Hoover be fired," "That the President ask for $2 billion to enforce Civil Rights laws." The President spoke briefly and warned his hearers not to expect miracles.

THE QUESTION will be asked whether the subject of family was that essential. The answer will depend on a judgment as to the nature of the Negro problem. If one sees it as wholly a white problem, a matter of racial discrimination and oppression which can and should be stamped out, then it will be held that any internal troubles Negroes may have will thereafter take care of themselves. If, on the other hand, one sees it as a systemic problem which, *whatever its origins*, is now producing results that no significant portion of the population intends, then family becomes a relevant and politically *useful* issue. I believe it fair to say that family disruption is both a valid measure of the overall impact of external forces on a group such as urban Negroes, and it is also a measure whereby outside groups—white Americans—can be brought to see the realities of life in terms that command attention and demand response. In these terms, the subject of family does not, as has been charged, distract from issues like employment, but rather gives them a reality and urgency which normally they do not command among certain segments of the population. Writing in *Christianity and Crisis* in February 1965, Reverend Spike took particular exception to the fact that *Life* magazine seemed to approve the report. But that was just the point: family is an issue that comes home to responsible and influential, but conservative, persons such as the editors of *Life*. (Reverend Spike was murdered in tragic circumstances last summer, and cannot rebut anything I might say; so no more of him, although his influence in this matter was considerable and in ways decisive.)

But the essential fact about the subject of family in this connection was that upon it turned the issue of whether the conference and the administration would be kept to the President's proposition that a crisis was in the making within the Negro community. Rainwater and Yancey put it as follows:

> For a government that wanted to move vigorously on social and economic reform to benefit Negroes, the Moynihan *report* provided a strong justification. For a government that wanted to "cool it," to avoid action that could no longer be afforded without having to take the blame for inaction, the Moynihan *controversy* provided an ideal distraction. The President and his aides could relax. A civil-rights strategy of "getting Moynihan" would obviously distract from "getting" the White House in the sense of either pressing for expanded federal commitments or protesting the lack of action.

I happen not to accept this interpretation. The administration was, and is, as much committed to the goals of the Howard speech as when it was delivered. But it lacked the resources of time and political capital to force the issue. (Remember that at this point, the civil-rights militants, Negro and white, were also bitterly attacking the war in Vietnam. The White House *had* to placate them, and in this instance all that was asked, ironically, was that it not move forward on the vast and expensive program of social reform to which in the wake of the report it had committed itself.) The most that could be hoped for was that the businessmen and liberal leaders on the President's new Council should stick by the Howard thesis and press the matter. They did nothing of the sort. In retrospect it is clear that civil rights had become for them a cause that could no longer stimulate or inspire them to take any grave risks. Their strategy now consisted of appearing to take an "advanced" social position, while remaining entrenched behind the most solid of orthodoxies. But faced with the prospect that this time there might be some real danger, that a genuinely—horrid word—controversial issue was being raised, the President's Council—persons solidly representative of the civil-rights establishment of that time—did not consider the matter even long enough for it to be said that it collapsed. It did not consider the matter at all. The subject was not dropped, it was never even raised.

The President's Council failed because in the end it had no views: all it sought was agreement. A quest for peace of this kind gives maximum leverage to the group with the most intransigent and assertive opinions, and the greatest ideological discipline. At the moment in question, in matters concerning civil rights, this was a position conspicuously enjoyed by the liberal Left. If that term is vague, anyone with experience in politics will nonetheless recognize the reality behind it. For the first half of the 1960's, the liberal Left, for the most part white, very nearly dominated the civil-rights movement, most conspicuously of course in SNCC and CORE, but also in the older-line organizations. The relation was not unlike that of the Marxist Left to the trade unions of the 1930's. The mass of the movement in each instance was made up of rank-and-file persons, with, on the whole, quite conventional views and expectations. But surrounding the leaders was an echelon of intense,

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purposeful, powerful, and dedicated persons of a quite different character. And behind them was a community of sorts, in universities, in churches, in large cities, small businesses, and assorted journalistic enterprises that provided funds, ideas, support, followings: all those things that make for effective political action. There is no need to exaggerate its coherence in order to perceive that something like a community of opinion has existed here. More than most tendencies, this one is ridden with argument and controversy, but not uncommonly such strife ends up with substantial accord that can shift quite dramatically. Thus, one moment the war in Vietnam is a monstrously immoral adventure forced on the nation by a half demented President in the hands of a paranoid military, and the next instant the war is become a routine, ongoing affair that provides no excuse whatever for not allocating the billions necessary to implement the Freedom Budget at home.

THE NATION needs the liberal Left. It has provided a secular conscience in a civilization where the immorality of large organizations has become, as Niebuhr warned us it would, almost the central danger of the age, and where the older voices of conscience have grown confused or silent or worse. Moreover, it has begun to affect and even to "infiltrate" religious institutions in many areas so that, of a sudden, churches stand for something in American public life other than that which is trivial, vulgar, or both. Had it not been for the liberal Left, it is unlikely that the civil-rights movement would have had the extraordinary impact and success of the past decade. But if one accepts the thesis that that was a first phase which now *must* be followed by a second, then the matter becomes more difficult. In the first phase, where issues of principle, of justice, of witness were involved, the liberal Left was an indispensable ally. In the second phase, however, where it becomes necessary to confront the realities of lower-class life, the liberal Left can be a disaster. Consider its reaction to the Watts riot. Anyone with a minimal sense of American social history would have instantly seen this as a calamity. Yet in no time, the liberal Left was depicting the participants not as a mob (and rather a merchandise-minded mob at that) but as an avenging, exultant proletariat. In the March 1966 COMMENTARY, Bayard Rustin explained that it had not been a riot at all, but rather a "Manifesto," a nicely articulated and discriminating statement of a political viewpoint. For a period after Watts it was not unusual to encounter middle-class civil-rights militants not only repeating the threats and predictions of further violence which had become commonplace on the part of Negroes, but actually enjoying the prospect. (How much of the backlash may be explained by Kipling's dictum: "If once you have paid . . . the Danegeld, you never get rid of the Dane"?)

The liberal Left wishes, on paper at least, to transform American society. It is largely made up of individuals who have passed through most of the stages of routine affluence, and in certain ways, again on paper, now want out. Negroes want in. Read *Ebony*. Read Myrdal. Read the election returns from Lowndes County. The great, guilty, hateful secret is that Negroes are not swingers. They are Southern Protestants. They like jobs in the civil service. They support the war in Vietnam, approve the draft, back the President. And all this in greater proportion than any other group in the nation. Negroes are other things, too—but at this point in their history, only in quite limited numbers. (Note that when in October 1966 the old-line civil-rights leadership in effect dissociated itself from CORE and SNCC and Black Power, the statement was signed by the heads of the Negro Elks and the Negro Masons—two gentlemen who had not heretofore appeared as civil-rights leaders, but who represent a very considerable number of Negroes.)

THE REACTION of the liberal Left to the issue of the Negro family was decisive (the Protestant reaction was clearly triggered by it). They would have none of it. No one was going to talk about their poor people that way. Next ensued a discouragingly familiar form of whipsawing. On the one hand, the problems did not exist, the whole affair was a calculated slander; on the other hand, these were not problems at all, but healthful adaptations to intolerable social conditions imposed by an unfeeling racist society. College professors waxed absolutely lyric on the subject of the female-headed household. One of the persisting themes was first sounded by William Ryan who, in his *Nation* article, introduced a novel social indicator, the illegitimacy conception rate. This rate reveals that white bourgeois females fornicate as much as, or even more than (although not of course so well as), Negro girls, and conceive almost as often. But thereafter they resort to (Park Avenue) abortionists. Thus the point becomes to establish *guilt* instead of to deal with a problem.

This is terrifyingly reminiscent of Stanley Elkins's abolitionists who seem never to have seen slavery as a social problem for slaves, but only as an ethical problem for slaveholders. Once legal bondage was at an end, the subject was closed so far as the Northerners were concerned. The fact that the slaves lived on, and the child is born—and needs help—is a matter somehow to be passed over. This is the crux of it. Typically, the refusal of the liberal Left to accept the unpleasant facts of life for the poor—there is delinquency in the slums, but those kids in the suburbs are just as bad and don't get arrested, etc. etc.—leads to the same position as does the insistence of the extreme conservatives on just such facts: namely, to do nothing. The liberal Left will acknowledge the relevance of these facts only to the extent that they serve as an

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indictment of American society; after that it loses interest. The extreme conservatives harp on these facts in order to indict the poor; after that, *they* lose interest. It does not occur to the liberal Left, for example, that the issue of illegitimacy has nothing to do with whether black women are more or less promiscuous than white women; it has to do with the number of children on the welfare rolls. This is a legitimate concern of public policy. At Howard, however, the President in a radical initiative made the damage to the life-chances of those children a further concern of public policy for the first time in American history. And the liberal Left responded by denying the facts of the damage ("the statistics are wrong") and/or denying that the damage was real ("it is a cultural pattern superior in its vitality to middle-class mores") and/or by arguing about the comparative sexual morals of white and black women.

The insistence, in short, of the liberal Left that the issue of disorganization in Negro lower-class life not be made a matter of public concern resulted directly in its not being made a matter of public action.

This is nowhere near as infrequent an outcome as might be thought. Thus, in recent months it has become clear that a combination of quite conservative and super-liberal forces is attempting to oppose efforts that might raise the number of Negroes in the armed forces to something like their proportion of the population. (They are overrepresented in infantry platoons, but seriously underrepresented in the good jobs elsewhere.) It doesn't matter that Negroes may like the army as a career. No one is *allowed* to like the army.

WITH ALL its virtues as a secular conscience, the liberal Left can be as rigid and destructive as any force in American life. One is reminded, in reading some of their remarks about the report on the Negro family, of Hannah Arendt's description of the totalitarian elites of Europe between the wars: "Their superiority consists in the ability to dissolve every statement of fact into a declaration of purpose." The report was neither a long nor a complicated document. It consisted for the greater part of social statistics combined with excerpts from social-science research papers. There was little interpretation, the object being to let the correlations speak for themselves, and the reputations of the authors cited carry the rest. The intention was to arouse a will to action, rather than to propose specific actions. Yet for a year I found myself the object of incredible accusations, some of them, from academia, going quite beyond the border of fair comment. Just before the White House Conference met in June, for example, a publication of the Ferkauf Graduate School of Education at Yeshiva University devoted itself to the subject: "The Moynihan Report and Its Critics: Which Side Are You On?" The publication was not on my side, heaven knows, but, more importantly, it depicted "my" side in terms near to absolute distortion: as against those who say lower-class youths lack employment opportunities, I was one of those who say they lack employability, etc. Now, even supposing that the report was not sufficiently clear on this point and others, it happens that in the two years or so preceding, I had contributed papers to three different books on the subject, and had preached on the problem of increasing job opportunities in at least a dozen articles in periodicals ranging from *Daedalus* ("Employment, Income, and the Ordeal of the Negro Family") and the *American Scholar* to *Commonweal, Look,* the Washington *Post,* even *Vocational Guidance Quarterly.* Yet in a three-page bibliography at the end of the Yeshiva bulletin, among 117 citations, there is not one item under my name, nor any reference to articles by Negro scholars such as C. Eric Lincoln's "The Absent Father Haunts the Negro Family," which appeared in the Sunday *Times* Magazine. This is the scholarship of Che Guevara. But it must be understood that the persons who put the bulletin out (it was signed by a Mr. R. G. Goldberg) unquestionably thought they were protecting the good name and furthering the best interests of a poor and victimized class. This was a time of great expectations, and, if one may be permitted, a certain arrogance on the Left. In the face of all reason, fact, and history, the more fashionable theoreticians were reviving the old dream of a vast coalition of Negroes, intellectuals, peace workers, migrant laborers, and the CIO that would take over and purify the nation. It was a time when, for example, Professor Richard A. Cloward of the Columbia School of Social Work propounded a "strategy of crisis" whereby civil-rights activists would enroll so many eligible Negroes on welfare rolls that city finances would collapse and the federal government would be forced to institute a guaranteed annual income. (Such a movement actually began. Had it made its way across the country quickly enough, Mr. Reagan might have won by two million votes.)

It would be entirely wrong to suggest that resentment over the report was confined to white intellectuals in New York. A great many Negro activists became quite incensed over it, and remained so. A clear concern on the part of many was that the issue would be picked up and used by racists. But there is almost no indication that this occurred, and on the other hand much evidence that Negroes in more ordinary walks of life both recognized what the report was about, and hoped something would come of it. In January, as an instance, the Jewish Labor Committee in Detroit sponsored a meeting at which a Wayne State University sociologist, Arthur Lipow, denounced the report as a "distorted . . . disgraceful . . . ideological rationalization to avoid the basic problem of Negro Americans." But the *Free Press* reporter who covered the occasion wrote that "most of those in the audience, which included top civil-rights

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leaders in Detroit, were openly hostile to Lipow's analysis. One Negro woman charged him with being blind to the harsh realities of the situation of many Negro Americans." And this is the point: the situation *is* real. To deny that it exists, or that anything can be done about it, is not very far from denying that anything *should* be done about it. (Harold Shephard has pointed out that liberals who today insist that government policies can have no effect on family stability are curiously reminiscent of conservatives of the 1930's who held that government could do nothing about unemployment.)

The urgency of a serious national commitment in the area of income support and guaranteed employment (which would be the central goals of a national family policy) increases as other options close. At the moment, Negroes are placing enormous confidence in the idea that quality education can transform their situation. But it is not at all clear that education has this potential. Last summer, the U.S. Office of Education issued its report on "Equality of Educational Opportunity" based on the study—the second largest in the history of social science—ordered by the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 of the educational facilities available to Negroes and other minority groups as compared with the white majority. The report, of which James S. Coleman of Johns Hopkins was the principal author, radically confounded expectation. Negroes, it turned out, tested badly at the outset of their schooling, and worse at the end of it. But the quality of the schools they attend—shockingly segregated schools—was not in fact significantly different from that of schools attended by whites and others. More important, the regression analyses carried out for the study produced the astounding proposition that the quality of the schools has only a trifling relation to achievement:

> Differences in school facilities and curriculum, which are the major variables by which attempts are made to improve schools, are so little related to differences in achievement levels of students that, with few exceptions, their effects fail to appear even in a survey of this magnitude.

These findings may be modified by further analysis, and it should be noted that for the worst-off groups, better schools do show a distinct if small relation to achievement, and in the right direction. Nonetheless, the two great determinants of outcome turned out to be family background and social peer group. In a later article in *The Public Interest*, Coleman wrote:

> Two points, then, are clear: (1) These minority children have a serious educational deficiency at the start of school, which is obviously not a result of school; and (2) they have an even more serious deficiency at the end of school, which is obviously in part a result of school.
>
> Altogether, the sources of inequality of educational opportunity appear to lie first in the home itself and the cultural influences immediately surrounding the home; then they lie in the schools' ineffectiveness to free achievement from the impact of the home, and in the schools' cultural homogeneity, which perpetuates the social influences of the home and its environs.

Coleman's study is probably the best statistical case for integration ever made: pouring conscience money into slum schools is simply not likely to do the job. He provides strong support for the thesis of Otis Dudley Duncan (as expressed in a forthcoming article) that despite the many paper gains that Negroes have been making (and some of course more real than that), "There are two areas of bedrock resistance to 'the progress of the Negro race': residential segregation and the weakness of the Negro family structure." Coleman's data argue that both must be overcome, while the data relating to Duncan's thesis declare that this is not happening. It now appears it could be a generation before any extensive neighborhood integration is achieved. For the moment, the trend is in the opposite direction, owing to changes in the South. Unfortunately, housing integration presents itself as a deceptively simple matter: pass a law. It is likely therefore to preoccuppy civil-rights forces, even though it is the area of the most adamant and resourceful opposition. In the meantime, measures to enhance the stability and resources of the family, which might in fact be easier to achieve, will probably continue to be neglected: those who want housing integration most are likely to support these measures least, and very possibly nothing will be achieved on either count.

GIVEN THIS stalemate, it is altogether possible that the nation will spiral downward into a state of protracted violence and unrest. One infant in six in this country is Negro: the problem will not go away. Yet it may also be that recent events foretell a different outcome. The nation is turning conservative at a time when its serious internal problems may well be more amenable to conservative solutions than to liberal ones—or to solutions carried out by conservatives. It may be that conservatives have more stomach for dealing with the problems of poverty and disorganization in the necessary terms. Republican ranting about welfare contains much meanness and demagoguery, but it is also true that the number of families on welfare in this country *is* a scandal. They ought to be off the dole—not for the sake of the taxpayers, but for *their* sakes. The challenge is to find viable ways of doing this, but that will be impossible unless we first allow that the problem does exist.

The New York experience may be relevent here. Two of the more spectacular political victories of recent times were the election of the Republican John V. Lindsay as Mayor of New York City in 1965 and a year later, the re-election for a third term of Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller. It was not commented upon, but the issue of race was as

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much present in their campaigns as it was in the more obvious "backlash" affairs elsewhere. In just about every subway car in the New York transit system in 1965 there was a large advertisement that said simply *"Breathe* easier, *Sleep* better, *Feel* safer, with the Lindsay Team." Anyone who does not know what that poster was about is really not eligible to vote. Similarly in 1966 Governor Rockefeller, as the New York *Times* reported, switched his campaign in the last weeks to concentrate almost entirely on crime in the streets.

Lindsay and Rockefeller are humane, progressive men with impeccable records of leadership in civil rights. But they perceive the reality of the internal problems of the slums, and are willing to get elected on that basis. It remains to be seen whether they and others like them will come forward with programs that will command conservative support for doing something about those problems: not necessarily out of compassion for the oppressed, but out of concern for the stability of society.

But to repeat, this is not a likely outcome. There are never enough Disraelis to go round. The more likely future is one dominated by hyper-conservatives unwilling to solve problems of the kind Negroes face, hyper-liberals reluctant to acknowledge the existence of such problems, and persons of the center increasingly aware that they are probably not competent and certainly not eligible to propose solutions of their own devising. The era of white initiatives on behalf of Negroes is over. The controversy over the report on the Negro family had at least this useful outcome: it raised for Negroes the question of what terms they are willing to accept as grounds for social action. The continuing controversy among Negroes themselves over the issue, which for a year now has been dead and forgotten in Washington, suggests that some at least are finding this a timely and useful development.

TWO FAIRLY clear points of view have emerged. On the one hand, there is that of Martin Luther King Jr., who is willing to describe the present conditions of life in the lower classes as a "social catastrophe" and to say in effect to the white world, "Put up or shut up." The basic idea is that there can and ought to be change. This is a view widely held by scholars and activists alike. Thus, Parren Mitchell, head of the Baltimore poverty program, declared at the height of the controversy: "Slavery depended upon preventing the Negro family from forming, and over the centuries since, that tradition hung on. Now what we need is a better tradition. We need to hold our families together in a stronger kind of responsibility." But just as many—more—have taken quite a different view, namely that the family structure of the lower classes is a natural and essentially healthful adaptation to special conditions of life. In an interview in November 1966 the novelist Ralph Ellison, expressing his annoyance with the report, said:

> Moynihan looked at a fatherless family and interpreted it not in the context of Negro cultural patterns, but in a white cultural pattern. He wasn't looking at the accommodations Negroes have worked out in dealing with fatherless families. Grandmothers very often look after the kids. The mother works or goes on relief. The kids identify with stepfathers, uncles, even the mother's boyfriends. How children grow up is a cultural, not a statistical pattern.

I would argue that this is a perfectly tenable position. There is no reason Negroes need conform to anyone's standards but their own, and like no one else, Ellison has evoked the qualities of endurance and holding-on which are as much the fact of Negro character in white America as are the extremes of respectability or disorganization. On the other hand, in order for this to be a *viable* position as well as a tenable one, it must reject not only conformity but dependency. It is all very well to point out with whom it is that impoverished Negro youth identifies: the public issue is who supports them. So long as exceptional numbers of Negro children are dependent on Welfare (recently the U.S. Commissioner of Welfare reported that the majority of families receiving AFDC payments now are nonwhites) and so long as vast numbers of Negro youths have to be helped along with Head Start, Upward Bound, Job Corps, and so on, Negroes will be at the mercy of whites demanding an end to "welfare chiseling" and "immorality," and also, no doubt, of the unwelcome ministrations of meliorists in the subcabinet. These things ought not to be so, but they are so. As the report said on its first page: "The racist virus in the American blood stream still afflicts us: Negroes will encounter serious personal prejudice for at least another generation." If at the moment educated, middle-class Negroes are much in demand and doing nicely, this is not so for the lower class and is likely never to be. This country is not fair to Negroes and will exploit any weaknesses they display. Hence they simply cannot afford the luxury of having a large lower class that is at once deviant *and* dependent. If they do not wish to bring it into line with the working class (*not* middle-class) world around them, they must devise ways to support it from within. It is entirely possible that this could happen, and it might be an eye-opener for all concerned. In all events, one of the most galling forms of dependency is surely behind us. The time when white men, whatever their motives, could tell Negroes what was or was not good for them, is now definitely and decidedly over. An era of bad manners is almost certainly begun. For a moment it had seemed this could be avoided, that the next two decades could be bypassed in a sweep of insight and daring. But the destiny reasserted itself. The Physiocrats never did have much luck.

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ELIE WIESEL

WILL SOVIET JEWRY SURVIVE?

In September 1965, ELIE WIESEL, *the well-known novelist, spent a number of weeks visiting the Jewish community in the Soviet Union. His report on that trip has recently been published as a book,* The Jews of Silence *(Holt, Rinehart & Winston). Mr. Wiesel returned to Moscow in October 1966 for the holiday of Sukkot; the present article, translated from the Hebrew by* NEAL KOZODOY, *contains his impressions from this second visit to the Soviet Jewish community.*

Elie Wiesel is a frequent contributor to these pages. His most recent novel, The Gates of the Forest *(Holt, Rinehart & Winston), won the first annual B'nai Brith Heritage Award in 1965.*

ACTUALLY, I SHOULD HAVE BEEN disappointed. I had in fact anticipated a certain letdown, and had even prepared myself for it. No holiday can be real unless it has something of the miraculous about it, and by definition a miracle must be a single, unique event. In this case, I had seen it all the year before: the ecstatic prayers of the Hasidim on the night of Shemini Atzeret; the processions in the Central Synagogue on Simchat Torah; the furtive questions put in a whisper to foreign guests; the communal singing; the sudden appearance of thousands of youngsters, demonstrating in public their unshakable solidarity with the Jewish people. Such images—sorrowful and sublime at once—had been indelibly engraved upon my memory from my last visit to Moscow in the fall of 1965. My experience then had been so strong, and so deep, that I feared a mere duplication of it would rob the event of one of its most important dimensions, and myself of a priceless memory. What would happen this year had already happened before. It would no longer be a mystery, or a surprise, but would seem somehow natural and routine. I had already seen everything to be seen, and had said about it everything I was prepared to say. There are some visions which I am convinced we must not behold more than once.

Yet I decided to return. Why, I don't myself know. Perhaps because I needed to confirm, for myself, that what I had seen and heard the year before was not in the nature of a momentary dream that had suddenly ignited my imagination. Or perhaps I returned because I felt an inner need to spend this particular holiday with these particular Jews. Something, at any rate, drew me to them—to their songs, to their enthusiasm, to their pride. And once among them, I witnessed a second miracle. Far from being disappointed, far from having to undergo the mere repetition of a previous experience, I found myself caught up in new surprises, and overcome by a new shock of recognition. The report I brought back last year was true—that much has not changed; but now I have come to see that its import is both more valid and more serious than even I had thought at the time. It may even be for this new knowledge that I returned.

* * * * *

I ARRIVED IN Moscow on October 5, the sixth day of Sukkot. Upon reaching my hotel I learned that a performance would be given that same evening by one of the Soviet Union's few troupes of Yiddish actors, led by the famous singer, Anna Gozik. It is virtually impossible to get tickets to these programs, even though they always consist of the same play: Sholem Aleichem's *Wandering Stars*—the only offering in the troupe's repertoire. People who have seen the performance twenty times return avidly for a twenty-first; the troupe visits Moscow only once a year, and the theater is always packed.

I noticed in the audience a considerable number of young people, who followed the action of the play through the whispered translations of their parents and grandparents. Whenever an actor delivered a line that suggested a double meaning, the audience burst into applause and loud bravos—as for instance when Miss Gozik, portraying Uriel daCosta, declared, "I am a Jew, and a Jew I shall remain!" The significance of such an affirmation for the Jews of the Soviet Union cannot be overestimated. The musical theme that evening was *Hava Nagilah*; at the end, everyone in the audience sang it together with the cast.

During intermission I spoke with some of the youngsters I had spotted in the audience. Although I asked them dutifully why they had bothered coming to a Yiddish performance rather than attending a Russian play or ballet, I knew beforehand what they would answer. In fact, they will go to anything that is Jewish, and are irrepressibly curious about the fragments which still remain of a Jewish culture that was once quite powerful in their country. Should a Yiddish theater be established again in Moscow, there would be no difficulty filling the auditorium. Of that I am sure.

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THE NEXT DAY I went to the Central Synagogue on Arkhipova Street. The sanctuary had been redecorated since the last time I was inside; it seemed better lit, more attractive. By contrast, however, the venerable chief rabbi, Yehuda Leib-Levin, appeared to have aged. It was clear from the weariness and grief reflected in his dark eyes that he had not yet recovered from the incident that had occurred in his congregation on Yom Kippur, and about which I had heard the night before. In his sermon on that day he had spoken in passing of the "two million" Jews murdered by the Germans twenty five years before. A number of those present in the synagogue protested, "Six million, not two!" The unfortunate rabbi was forced to explain that he had been referring only to Jews who were Soviet citizens. Unable—or unwilling—to understand why the rabbi felt constrained to differentiate among Jews, especially dead Jews, the congregation protested again. One supposes that they were justified in their complaint, although it is not for us to judge. The rabbi speaks as he is told to speak, and there is no guarantee that another man would have spoken differently.

The sexton had also changed. He too seemed older, less sprightly than a year ago. Who knows what he had gone through since then. Standing some distance from him was the most notorious of the Moscow "informers," a short hunchbacked man—wearing a green hat—whose features bore ugly testimony to his vocation. I myself saw him strike a Jew who dared to ask me for a prayer-shawl and *siddur*. It is estimated that there are at least twenty informers in the Moscow congregation—a number large enough to ensure the perpetuation of a constant sense of fear and suspicion among the others. It was this sense of fear that had been most strongly impressed upon me in my last visit, and that had haunted me throughout the year.

* * * * *

THIS TIME, however, I had come not in order to witness Jewish fear, but to participate in a Jewish festival. The following evening was Simchat Torah, the occasion which tens of thousands of Jewish youngsters have chosen as their annual evening of public celebration. During the previous week, posters had appeared on bulletin boards around the University: "The 'symphony' of Simchat Torah will be performed on the night of October 6, as usual, at the usual time and place." On that night, between thirty and forty thousand young Jews appeared outside the Central Synagogue, where they remained almost until dawn, singing and dancing in hasidic abandon.

By now, this holiday has become something of a tradition in the Soviet Union. The numbers of the participants have steadily increased over the years, and this year—although estimates vary according to the hours at which they were made—there appear to have been close to forty thousand youngsters at the Moscow synagogue. The police closed off the neighboring streets to traffic, and doctors and ambulances were stationed nearby in case of need. They were never called upon. Throughout the entire night of dancing, not a single person was injured; no one fainted, no one needed emergency first-aid. No one became drunk or got out of hand. Not a single person was arrested.

(About two or three years ago, the authorities had in fact tried to discourage similar festivities in Leningrad. The young people were asked to disperse. When they refused, about ten of them were arrested on the spot, but the others simply went on singing as if nothing had happened. Since then, the government has taken a more tolerant position: it allows Jewish youth to have its one holiday a year.)

As the first young people began to gather in the street outside the Moscow synagogue, I sat inside, waiting for the religious ceremonies to begin. Despite the unbearable crowding, the sanctuary seemed to exude a distinct air of lighthearted cheer. No one complained about the need to stand for long periods of time, or about the lack of room. Everyone—men, women, and children—waited patiently for the processions to begin. Of the four generations that had gathered together this evening, only the oldest knew what it was to pray. The oldsters still keep the tradition, while their grandchildren clearly have no concept of what the Jewish religion entails. They are interested not so much in the Jewish God, as in the Jewish people. Yet they too had pushed their way into the synagogue, to see for themselves what was to transpire in front of the Holy Ark.

This year, too, the ceremonies began only after a considerable delay. The congregation was not in a hurry. Friends shook hands, strangers exchanged smiles of greeting. Men and women mixed freely rather than remaining in their customary separate sections. Tonight, all barriers had fallen. Tonight it was permissible to talk, to laugh, to trust in the future. Even to converse with guests from abroad. Tonight, the hunchbacked informer, his eyes bulging with the rage of thwarted authority, was powerless.

The time came to begin. The foreign guests were invited to participate in the first procession, which was led by the chief rabbi himself. Each of us took a Torah scroll, and we set out together on our circuit of the hall. Within a matter of seconds, we had become separated, each of us surrounded by a sea of heads. The Jews refused to let us move. Kissing the Torah I held in my arms, they showered me with blessings and personal requests: "Tell them in Israel we're with them"; "Be strong, be valiant"; "Don't forget us, we haven't forgotten you." Later I was to find little slips of paper that had been thrust into my pockets: "Next year in

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Jerusalem"; "Blessings from an old Jew who will die on foreign soil"; a verse from *Hatikvah*. One of these pieces of paper had a characteristic request: "Please, give me a Hebrew grammar book for my son. He wants to learn. I'll wait for you tonight at ten. Outside." Just like that. No name, no place of meeting.

I tried to move forward, to complete our circuit of the hall; the procession had lasted a long time. Each step forward was like crossing the Red Sea. They refused to let me go. At that moment I had become for them a living link with world Jewry. Here and there I met persons I had spoken with the year before. We managed a few hasty conversations. "Has anything changed?" Nothing. "Is the situation better?" No. "Worse?" No. Three Jews had been sentenced to death for "economic crimes." In one city or another, the warden of a synagogue had been ordered to sever connections with his co-religionists in Moscow. "Are you still afraid?" Still. "What will happen?" Hope for the best. . . .

On the dais stood a young man wearing glasses; he was an army officer, recently discharged. He held in his arms a Torah scroll which he refused to relinquish. He stood close to the microphone, and his voice rolled out over the hall: "Blessed is our Lord who has created us for His glory . . . O, O, for His glory." The old rabbi began to sing along with him: "Yes, Yes . . . for His glory." Hundreds joined in. Only the sexton seemed serious, abstracted—as if he had for the first time discovered the meaning of the words and was quietly taking pity on Him who created such a world for His glory; or perhaps on himself for having been forced to live in such a world.

Last year, the younger people who came to the synagogue had stayed apart from the older Jews. This year, however, they too took part in the festivities, if only as enthusiastic onlookers. Here and there one of them overcame his embarrassment and, following the example of his neighbors, kissed the Torah (even though no one ever told him what is written in it), or sang a hasidic tune he had just learned (without pronouncing the words). A girl clapped her hands, another girl grinned broadly. Behind her stood a boy, preoccupied with his thoughts. I turned to him: "What are *you* doing here?" He answered, "No, you tell me." I knew the answer, even if it had not yet penetrated his own consciousness. He knew that I knew. He smiled at me: he was looking for himself.

This boy's education had failed him. He had been taught to despise his origins—yet he had returned to them. Every attempt had been made to poison his attitude toward Judaism—yet he had retained his ties. Nothing he had learned in school, or in libraries and youth clubs, had succeeded in cutting him off from his community. He had been taught that Judaism was an anachronism, that only criminals frequented the synagogue—yet this too had failed to sway him. He does not, to be sure, come to the synagogue to pray, but he does come to see Jews praying. And that is enough. There are certain silent glances that are worth more than all the prayers composed by the ancients.

As was the case last year, however, the real holiday did not take place inside, but outside in front of the synagogue, where two gigantic floodlights had been installed to illuminate the street. It seemed as if the entire city had emptied its youngsters here, where now they formed into groups, singing and dancing. One circle stood around a girl strumming her guitar and singing Yiddish folktunes. Further away, hundreds of students listened to a young man coaxing a melody from his balalaika. There in the corner someone played a harmonica, and there again I found an amateur poet reciting satiric verses about anti-Semitism in Russia. All these voices and melodies seemed to swell together into one pure crescendo of sound, overwhelming the listener and drawing him inexorably into the mounting wave of excitement. Last year the youngsters knew only two or three Yiddish and Hebrew songs. This year they had managed to learn another, and yet another. But their own unique anthem had not changed. It is a song we used to sing at Jewish weddings, when the guests were invited to greet the bride and groom; but the lyrics have been altered by these youngsters so as to refer to their new-found identity: "Come let us go, all of us together, and greet the people Israel."

Walking among them, I suddenly recalled a story by I. L. Peretz about a village lad who played his flute in the synagogue because he didn't know how to pray. Like him, these youngsters also do not know how to pray—nor, perhaps, are they interested in prayer. But they know how to sing, and how to dance. And as a hasidic *rebbe* once put it, it is also possible to bring the Messiah through the power of dance.

* * * * *

AT A CERTAIN moment, close to midnight, the lights went out. The two floodlights in front of the synagogue suddenly went dark and stood like blind men. A gloom descended over Arkhipova Street. The crowd stood silent, confused, waiting. Short-circuit? No. A subtle hint from above that it was time to break up. One mustn't overdo things. Tomorrow was a schoolday, a workday. It was time to stop, time to go home for another long year. One could return in 1967.

The confusion lasted no more than a minute. It was followed by a groan of disappointment, then a roar of protest. They didn't want to leave. Somebody took a newspaper out of his pocket and set it on fire—the natural act of a man who wished to see where he was. His neighbors quickly followed suit. The idea seemed to please every-

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one, and word of it was passed along from group to group, from circle to circle. Thousands of newspapers were lit at once, and within a matter of moments the celebration had become transformed into a weird procession of people bearing flaming torches. No one organized this parade, no one arranged for it ahead of time. No one could even have known it would take place. It all happened quite suddenly, and in silence. The quiet was virtually absolute. There was no singing, no talking —only the crackle of burning paper.

Then, in the quiet, about a hundred students climbed onto the balcony of a nearby building. Holding their torches high, they began to chant in unison in both Hebrew and Russian: "The people Israel lives! The people Israel lives! The people Israel lives!" The slogan electrified those standing below, and they roared in answer: "Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!" It was a simple and spontaneous affirmation, but one which should put to rest our doubts about the future of Jewish youth in Russia. There, too, the people Israel lives.

* * * * *

THIS, PERHAPS, is the most forceful lesson now to be learned about the Jews of the Soviet Union. Although the same evening had made an overwhelming impression upon me a year ago as well, this time the experience was deeper, and more complete. It had taken on a new and all-important dimension of self-assurance. Not only were more young people present, but they had given a more open and straightforward expression to their Jewishness. It is a mistake to speak of this event as a passing phenomenon; those who are still accustomed to declare at every opportunity that in the course of ten years there will be not a single trace left of Jewish life in Soviet Russia have not seen these youngsters. It is true, of course, that in the past, certain activities took place only in darkness. Young people preferred to meet in the shadows, in side-street courtyards. Unsure of themselves, they could hardly become reconciled to the fact that someone had taken the initiative of setting up special floodlights in the street for the holiday. Despite the general easing of tensions, they remained, justifiably, suspicious. There was no way of knowing whether the man standing off at the side, watching the celebration, was not memorizing names or faces.

This year, however, they had taken the decisive step: they became angry when the lights went out. Now they were demanding both to see and to be seen. For me, their spontaneous torchlight parade is a symbol of their new desire to come up from underground, and to assert their Jewishness in open pride.

On this visit, too, I talked with them for long hours on end. Their knowledge of Jewish matters has not improved. Their faith in Marxism has not been shaken, nor have their ties to Soviet Russia been weakened. I heard not a single word of criticism against the regime in which they live. But I can report that their Jewish consciousness has taken deeper root. Judaism is no longer a matter of apologetics with them. Unlike many of their counterparts in the West, they are not defensive about their Jewishness, but regard it as a basic fact of life which is not open to discussion or philosophical debate.

"Anyone who wants to defame us can go ahead and do so," said a chemistry student I had talked to once before, a year ago. "That's their business. We simply don't answer. We refuse to argue with them. Our answer lies in the fact that we continue to survive—and that we wish to go on surviving."

Another student said, "We refuse to lower ourselves to their level. They've convinced us we're right, and that's the greatest compliment we can pay them."

A girl, a student of Western literature and a friend of them both, said to me in Yiddish: "No one denies that there are anti-Semites here. We present a problem to them, but we've decided not to let them present a problem to us. Once and for all, we've simply refused."

And yet, it is the anti-Semites who have caused these youngsters to return to Judaism, who have coerced them into becoming more Jewish. "It hurts me that our 'revival' has come about because of external, rather than internal, pressures; my only comfort is that this fact hurts the anti-Semites even more," said a man who teaches foreign languages at one of the Soviet universities. A year ago this same man had told me how he had decided not to tell his son about his annual visits to Arkhipova Street, on the night of Simchat Torah, but had then actually met his son here, in the crowd. "This year we came together," he said proudly. I asked him about the rest of the year. Did he talk with his son about Jewish matters? No. His wife is not Jewish, he explained, and there seems no reason to cause trouble at home. "But," he went on, "let's not worry. The situation cannot remain static. It has to change. Once you come to dance on Simchat Torah, you want to live like a Jew the rest of the year too. We'll see."

Indeed, since last year the situation has clearly changed. Young people who formerly knew about the existence of one Jewish holiday have uncovered others. Rosh Ha-Shanah and Yom Kippur do not, it is true, attract them; they want to celebrate, not to fast and grieve. The "festival of freedom" is a far more exciting prospect. On a night during Passover 1966, several hundred youngsters gathered opposite the Moscow synagogue and began to dance and sing. They were the pioneer core, scouting the territory. Had there been no interference, Passover would probably have become another Simchat Torah. Someone, however, suggested to the community leaders that it was inadvisable to overdo such things. The warden of the synagogue was sent outside to ask them to leave. When this failed, the old rabbi himself

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came out and begged them to return home. "You're disturbing the peace," he told them. The youngsters finally took pity on these men, and rather than endanger their position with the authorities, decided to leave. They could wait until October. On Simchat Torah all the enthusiasm pent up during the year would finally be released.

* * * * *

ABOUT A thousand men and women filled the synagogue on the following day, for the second ceremony of processions. Many had brought presents for the guests: vodka, cake, and apples. They had saved up for a week or a month in order to provide this personal gift to the Jews who came to them from afar. A bottle of liquor costs about five rubles—a day's wages for an officeworker or skilled laborer. I found myself surrounded by a dozen men, all pleading with me to drink, to accept a piece of cake or an apple. The congregation consists in the main of *pensionnaires,* retired workers. Last night was the youngsters' holiday; today was theirs. "Drink *lehayyim,*" a Jew whispered to me. "I've kept this bottle for six months, waiting for this moment." Standing next to him was a man with a red beard, who also urged me to drink: "Drink to us all; who knows, maybe *your* benedictions will be accepted in heaven."

Here and there I heard people say proudly that the whole city was talking about what had happened the night before. Thirty- to forty thousand youngsters had taken part in the "symphony of Simchat Torah," and no one had been arrested, or even molested. This morning the chief trustee had contacted the police to ask if everything had been all right. Everything was fine. Not a single incident had been reported—highly unusual in the case of such a large gathering.

The processions ended. Men were being called up to the Torah. We all sang: "Blessed be He who has chosen us from among all nations and given us His Torah." I returned to my bench in the visitors' loge. Hunched in a corner, I read the anonymous notes I had once again found in my pocket: "Next year in Jerusalem"; "Be strong and valiant"; "Don't forget us. . . ."

Suddenly, to my astonishment, I heard singing outside. I thought at first it was the effect of the vodka. But the voices became louder. I left the visitors' section and hurried out to the street. I couldn't believe my eyes. Hundreds of young Jews were there, singing and dancing, exactly like the night before. Where they had come from, how they had managed to leave their classrooms or offices—I don't know. But they had come. Once again the police were called upon to block the street off. Only pedestrians were allowed to pass, and I heard some of them querying the officers about what was going on. One of the policemen replied, "It's just the Jews, celebrating their holiday."

For the second time in twenty-four hours I heard the old familiar songs in Yiddish and Russian. Circles were again formed to dance the *hora.* A young man climbed on the shoulders of his friends, shouting, "Long live the Jewish people!" The crowd roared back its approval, and urged him on. For a minute he seemed at a loss, then recovered himself and began to shout out the names of famous Jewish personalities in the Soviet Union: "Long live Benjamin Dimshitz!" "Long live David Oistrakh!" "Leonid Kogan!" "Yevsei Liberman!" "Botvinik!" "Maya Plisetskaya!" "Nehama Lipshitz!" All Jews. But the list was quickly exhausted and his audience wanted more. Unthinking, he chose the name of one long forgotten: "Long live Lazar Kaganovitch!" Someone near me asked jokingly whether Kaganovitch was still alive. Yes, he is still alive, but only the Jews remember him. I wonder if it ever crossed his mind that a day would come when his name would be trumpeted aloud outside the Jewish synagogue, while he himself was banished from the Kremlin walls.

A boy was pointed out to me who had traveled a distance of thirty miles in order to return a notebook that belonged to a foreign tourist. A second had come all the way from the other end of Moscow because the night before someone had promised to bring him a Hebrew calendar. Others came for no specific reason other than to continue what had been started the night before, as if they had simply resolved to ignore their official allotment of one night a year. It appears that when I expected to see nothing new here this year, I too had not reckoned with Jewish youth.

* * * * *

IN ALL OTHER areas, however, it must be said that the situation remains as petrified as ever. No one holds out any hope that the general discriminatory measures against Jews will be put to an end. German citizens living in the Soviet Union, for instance, have their own schools, their own theater, their own folklore, publishing houses, cultural life, and even radio and television programs. The Jews still have nothing. All others can pride themselves on their national heritage—but not the Jews.

As for the economic trials, it is difficult to ascertain whether they have been completely stopped or not. The press, at any rate, has ceased to publicize them, and that is a good sign. But there are persistent rumors about Jews who have been sentenced to death or imprisonment for alleged economic crimes. These rumors are not spontaneous, nor are they groundless: the place of trial and the names of the accused are known. In addition, the pervasive fear which I encountered a year ago may still be said to exist. This time, too, I came across Jewish tourists from abroad who had tried unsuccessfully to speak with their relatives in Kiev and Minsk. The average Russian citizen does not hesitate to talk with foreigners; Jews shy away from them. In the synagogue I met someone who

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had been interrogated about a conversation he had had with me last year. They had showed him photographs, had wanted to know every question I asked him and what he had replied. He was released after twenty-four hours, but the effects of the interrogation had yet to wear off. Only because there was a large crowd around us did he feel free to speak with me again. In another place, in different circumstances, he would have avoided me completely. He told me so himself.

On the other hand, I heard of Jews in other cities who had overcome their fear. This year a number of Jews even had the courage to request permission to be reunited with their families abroad. A short while ago an old Hasid was granted an exit visa. Hundreds of his fellow Hasidim, singing and dancing, accompanied him to the train station, to the general astonishment of the other passengers. No one interfered.

Whether or not there will be interference in the future, only time can tell. I believe, however, that no amount of interference will succeed in dampening the new spirit of awakening that breathes in Soviet Jewry, especially among the young. And I believe that the authorities know this. Soviet policy toward the Jews seems to be at a crossroads; the trouble is that no matter which direction it finally takes, the results will in all likelihood be the same. A policy of leniency—even token leniency—will cause many Jews who have hitherto wandered about as strangers among strangers, along the fringes of their people, to return to Judaism. Once it is known that it is permissible to live openly as a Jew—without the fear of public insults and degradation—such people will return in the thousands, for the simple reason that it has been proved to them in their very bones that a Jew cannot live in Russia as a non-Jew.

But an opposite policy—of suppression through the real means of fear and terrorization—will only bring about similar results. The experience of past years has taught us that young Jews will oppose this kind of pressure. They have already demonstrated their unwillingness to surrender either to blandishments or to threats, and their adherence to Judaism will increase precisely as they are asked to reject it. The further they are separated from their people, the more will they assert their identification with it.

It is possible therefore to say that Soviet authorities have missed their opportunity. It may be that at one time—two or three generations ago—it was possible to solve the "Jewish problem" in the Soviet Union, for better or for worse, through a process of voluntary or forced assimilation. Many Jews, if given the opportunity, would perhaps have tried to assimilate and to live as non-Jews; but this was denied them. The general populace refused to accept them as citizens with equal rights. A Jew born as a Jew remained a Jew until the day of his death, whether he liked it or not. His national origin was stamped on all his documents.

By now, however, young Jews in Russia have rejected the solution of assimilation altogether. Although they have had no education in Judaism —except what they have learned from anti-Semitic literature—they cling ferociously to their community. Although non-religious, they celebrate Jewish holidays and sing Jewish songs. Under no circumstances will they allow their Jewishness to be degraded or killed.

I RETURNED from my second trip to Moscow somewhat encouraged. I am convinced that however events turn out, these young Jews will continue to seize every available opportunity to demonstrate their solidarity with the Jewish community. I have no doubt that in the not too distant future they will appear in front of the synagogue not just once a year but twice, then three or four times, and then once a month. Something is taking place among Jewish youth in the Soviet Union, and the time has come for us to realize it. Without outside help, without teachers or books, without leaders and meeting places, even without an appropriate spiritual climate, they have managed to survive, and will manage in the future as well. And they will do so, I should add, on their own. They learn Hebrew in secret, translate a Hebrew song into Russian, pass from hand to hand slips of paper with a few lines of Jewish history written on them. They listen to foreign broadcasts and circulate among themselves news of what is happening in world Jewry and in the Jewish state. This activity is not organized by any single person in any single place. Each one of them takes part and feels personally responsible for its success.

Their salvation, then, will come from within themselves, not from us. They may already have realized how futile it is to rely on us—either on our help or on our sympathy—and so have taken their destiny into their own hands. In past years, guests from abroad played an important role on the night of Simchat Torah. Each one of us would be surrounded by hundreds of youngsters, and we would tell them what was happening elsewhere in the world. We taught them new songs. This time, however, we were only observers. A year ago, they seemed to be making a conscious effort to explain and clarify their Jewishness, both for themselves and for others. This year, everything had suddenly become clear. Few of the participants were to be seen engaged in discussions among themselves or with the foreign guests. Rather than besiege us with questions, they appeared content with what they themselves knew. They didn't need us any longer. And the next day, when they came in groups to the synagogue, and began to sing and dance, it was without our knowledge. We went home; they continued to dance and shout: "The people Israel lives!" That song will never die.

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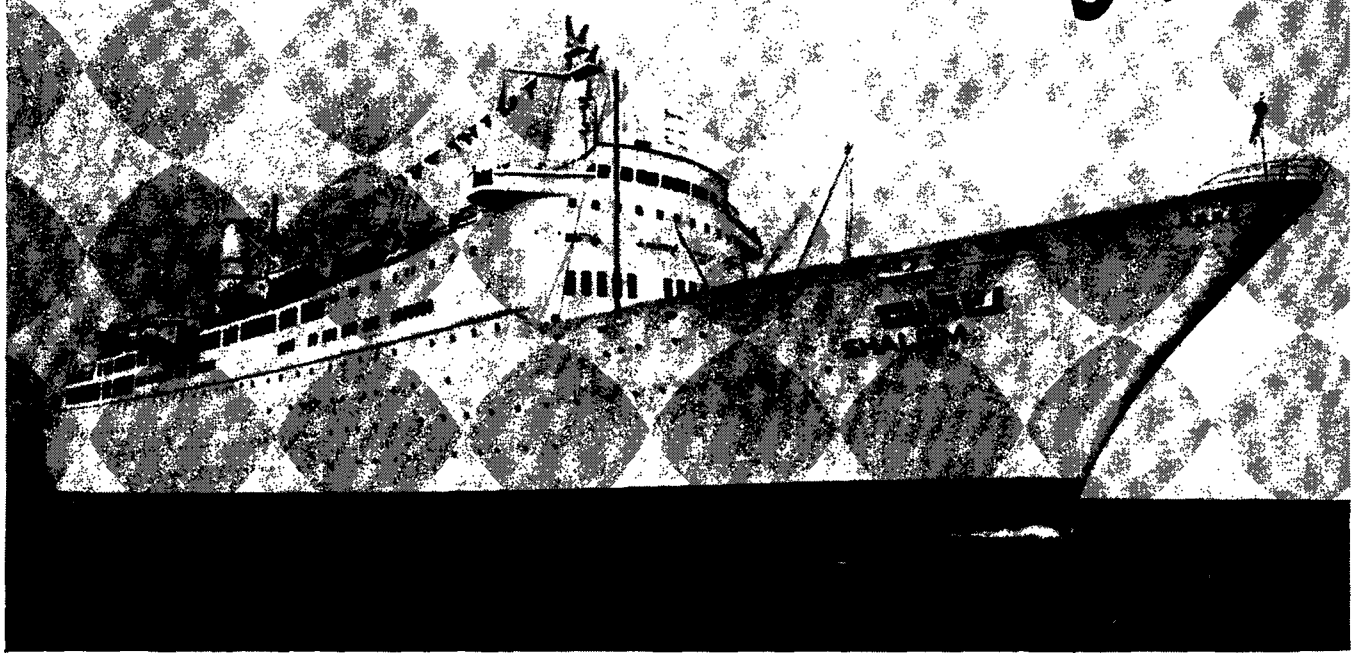

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BENJAMIN I. SCHWARTZ

UPHEAVAL IN CHINA

WHAT LIES BEHIND the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" of 1966? The news out of China seems nothing less than fantasic: vast hordes of the young and very young have suddenly been mobilized to carry out the spiritual transformation of Chinese society; a wholesale assault has been made upon the entire Chinese cultural heritage, as well as upon the "bourgeois" culture of the West, including everything from Bach to recent Soviet literature and modish hair-styles. This movement has been attended by a hysterical, unrelieved scream of adulation for the person and thought of Mao Tse-tung as the single source of all wisdom, and by the revelation of a titanic political struggle involving some of the CCP's most prominent leaders and extending deep into the whole institutional apparatus of Chinese society. The official Chinese media have themselves emphasized with monotonous insistence the unprecedented revolutionary nature of what is happening. Every effort is being made to suggest that the People's Republic is turning a fresh page in its eventful history.

Is all this nothing more than the surface reflection of an all-out conflict of power among individuals and groups eager to snatch the mantle of leadership from an enfeebled Mao? Is it a struggle between the army and the party? Does it represent an effort to achieve a maximum mobilization of the population in the face of what is felt to be the imminent possibility of war with the United States? Is it a response to a vast economic crisis hidden from our view? Or does the very phrase "Cultural Revolution" actually furnish some real clue to the nature of what is going on?

Before indulging in speculation as to the long-term implications of the "Cultural Revolution," we might remind ourselves that China has witnessed at least two such unpredicted shifts of course during the last decade. The "Hundred Flowers" campaign of 1956-57 suggested a new policy of liberalization and relaxation; it was followed in 1957-58 by the apocalyptic "Great Leap Forward" with its communes, backyard blast furnaces, and hints of total collectivization. Each of these departures was attended by unexpected consequences and sober reassessments. Together, they serve to warn us of the dangers that must accompany any attempt to assess the full impact of the "Cultural Revolution" on the vast masses of Chinese society, or its lasting effects.

We can, however, say something about the antecedents of the present "Cultural Revolution." For in spite of the emphasis on its novelty, many of its component themes may be traced to beginnings made in the period 1961-62 and beyond that back to the issues raised by the "Great Leap Forward" of 1958.

In many ways, the "Great Leap Forward" represented Mao Tse-tung's finest hour. This is not to discount the overwhelming victory of 1949, the successful application of Maoist methods to the vast tasks of political consolidation and organization, or the seemingly successful Maoist effort to "remold" the mental outlook of an entire population. Yet, as the government turned its attention in the early 50's to the tasks of modernization, there was always discernible a modest deference to "superior Soviet experience." Shortly after the takeover, Mao remarked soberly: "Things in which we were well versed will soon be needed no longer and we shall have to do things in which we are not well versed." In all these matters the Soviet Union played the role of teacher, not only because this was a condition of the alliance with Stalin, but also, no doubt, because of a genuine Chinese belief in Soviet experience. Thus, while the last decade of Chinese Communist history has been marked by erratic departures and sweeping experiments, the first seven years seemed to move steadily toward an ever-increasing Sovietization of Chinese life.

After 1955, however, it would appear that serious questions arose (in the more lenient atmosphere made possible, no doubt in part, by the death of Stalin) concerning the total applicability of Soviet methods to Chinese problems, particularly to Chinese economic problems. The new feeling was that Chinese methods had to be found for dealing with Chinese difficulties. By the end of 1957—after the demise of the "Hundred Flowers" experiment—we find the gradual emergence of new approaches in the economic sphere, particularly in the area of rural economy. These ap-

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proaches, which were ultimately to culminate in the spectacular commune experiment of 1958, were designed to cope with the very real and intractable problems of Chinese agriculture and China's huge population; they seemed, moreover, to involve the application of Maoist maxims and teachings to areas where Soviet wisdom had hitherto prevailed. Just as the Red Army had won its victories by depending on men rather than weapons, the peasants were now expected to win their war against the land by mobilizing vast human energies rather than by relying on material resources. Like the guerrillas of the past, who sacrificed their petty interests to the larger cause with little thought of remuneration, the peasant masses, in their devotion to the new state, could be induced to put forth their maximum energies without the promise of material incentives. Filled with ardor and enthusiasm, the peasant would exercise all his initiative and ingenuity to fulfill his production tasks. In this effort he would be directly led and inspired, as in the old Yenan days, by party cadres thoroughly imbued with a selfless Communist ethic, and capable of exercising leadership in the most diverse areas of economic, social, and cultural activity.

IT NOW SEEMED possible that the same Maoist maxims which had worked so well in the idyllic days of Yenan (at least, as viewed through the lenses of Mao's nostalgic idealization) and in the postwar period of consolidation would be equally effective in pushing forward China's economic development. This possibility in turn opened up utopian perspectives, so that it can be said that in 1958 Mao experienced what would be called his full beatific vision. The vast hinterlands of China would be organized into a gigantic network of communes, each one a self-sustaining economic, cultural, and even military cell. These cells would be held together and led forward by the monolithic hierarchy of the Communist party, whose members embodied both the highest Communist virtues and the greatest technical versatility. The collective solidarity of the masses would be further welded by a sense of militant solidarity against the enemy without.

Needless to say, this image of the society as an armed camp of comrades-in-arms, united in clear-cut conflict against the ubiquitous reactionary enemy, was an integral part of the total vision. Within such a society, the role of the professionals, and of the academic and literary intelligentsia —a stratum which had demonstrated its essential unreliability during the "Hundred Flowers" campaign—would be reduced to a minimum. Professionals and academic experts were not only guilty of presuming to lay claim to autonomous areas of knowledge (which they used to place themselves outside of and above the party), but were also inclined to selfish careerism and personal vanity. Built into their outlook—according to the new "vision"—was an exaggerated emphasis on "objective" difficulties and a kind of antiseptic neutralism directly antagonistic to the official view of China and the world—a view which stressed the titanic struggle between the forces of good and the forces of evil. The individualistic vanity of intellectuals and literary men had led them to a constant pursuit of irony, ambiguity, and complexity—qualities which are the enemies of simplicity —and into a concern for their petty personal destinies. They represented much of what was most obnoxious in modern Western urban civilization. China must achieve wealth, national power, and Communism while at the same time restricting and by-passing such baleful influences.

It might be added in passing that Mao himself has always been somewhat more complex than his vision. He has not been immune to all the joys of the flesh or the vanities of individual glory. A literary man of no small vanity, he has allowed himself to write traditional symbolic poetry in a style not permitted to others, and in his encounters with foreigners has often suggested that his apprehension of reality is somewhat more ironic than the grand simplicity of his vision would appear to indicate.

One important aspect of the "Great Leap Forward" was its innovations in the sphere of foreign policy. The period was marked by a new and basic consistency of spirit (a consistency which had not always existed) between internal and external policy. Just as China was now expected to overcome all internal obstacles by a massive mobilization of "subjective" forces, so too on the global scene the Communist bloc was expected to join forces in a policy of bold confrontation with imperialism. This posture was, of course, still based on a fundamental belief in the solidarity of the bloc and on the assumption of long-term cooperation between the Soviet Union and China.

As we know, the utopian hopes of the "Great Leap" were never realized, but rather gave way to the massive retreat and the severe economic crisis of the 1959-1962 period. Given the soaring hopes of 1958, one cannot but feel that the retreat must have occasioned the profoundest chagrin on the part of Mao Tse-tung. Those who came under attack in 1959 were precisely the "Right opportunists" (the most prominent of them was P'eng Te-huai) who had been least enthusiastic about the "Great Leap" and who were evidently now saying, "I told you so." Even now it would appear that the "Right opportunists" of 1959 remain one of the main targets of the proletarian "Cultural Revolution."

By 1960, the retreat was well underway. In the economic sphere it involved a decentralization of the communes and a striking new emphasis on the primacy of agriculture over industry and on material incentives for peasants in the form of private plots and free markets. It was a sober and realistic response and quite originally Chinese. It

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certainly did not involve a return to the Soviet model. As with all such major shifts in the past, it also seemed to involve reversals of policy in other areas of social and cultural life. Students were now told to devote themselves to their studies, and to respect elderly professors. The stock of "expertise" rose, particularly in the economic and scientific spheres. Academic historians were again encouraged to treat the problems of Chinese history with a certain limited degree of freedom. We can only speculate on Mao Tse-tung's relationship to all this. In spite of his utopian visions, he has always in the past been able to recognize intractable facts when they stare him in the face. One may surmise that in the economic sphere he acquiesced to the new policies while perhaps holding his silence in that other vast sphere which the Chinese now call "cultural."

It is important to note that even at the height of the period of retreat there were certain obvious areas of dissonance. It was, of course, precisely during the 1960-62 period that the Sino-Soviet crisis came to the surface. Peking was rapidly moving from a rejection of Soviet policies to an assertion of its own authority as the bearer of true Marxism-Leninism. Even now, one of the peculiarities of the relationship between the Soviet Union and China lies in the fact that they still remain enmeshed with each other through their conflicting claims to possessing the one truth. This means that internal domestic policies cannot be divorced from "foreign relations." One need not doubt the sincerity of the Chinese leadership when it began to see a relationship between the errors of Soviet world policy and domestic Soviet "revisionism"; and when the Soviets, for their part, attacked the "Great Leap Forward" and its utopian mystique, it was not only because they regarded it as economically unsound but also because they could not afford to ignore what they considered to be Mao Tse-tung's "petty bourgeois," distorted image of the good Communist society (just as the Chinese could not later ignore Khrushchev's "bourgeois" vision of Communism). The Soviet Union, in Mao's view, was sliding back into capitalism because it had placed all its reliance on institutional conditioning and had neglected the spiritual transformation of the masses. If China had its own message for the world, it was one which called for more, rather than less, emphasis on the ideological—or, as it is now called, the "cultural"—factor; it was, in effect, the message of the "Great Leap Forward."

WE NOW KNOW that the universalization of Mao's teachings in 1958 also embraced the military sphere. Here too, the Soviet model—with its emphasis on professionalism, technical proficiency, and basic control by the officer corps—was to give way to party dominance ("politics in command"), an emphasis on the spiritual training of the soldier, a downgrading of the officer corps, and participation by the army in all sorts of social activities. This reversion to the maxims of Yenan was, to be sure, balanced by the determination to achieve a nuclear capacity, and in 1958 still presupposed cooperation with the Soviet Union in the event of war. In this sphere, however, despite the general failure of the "Great Leap Forward," there was to be no retreat. As late as August 1959, P'eng Te-huai, Minister of Defense and defender of military professionalism (and professionalism in general), was overwhelmingly defeated. Neither the deterioration of relations with the Soviet Union, the termination of Soviet nuclear aid, nor the serious crisis of morale in the army during the 1960-61 period, was to lead to any departure from the Maoist line in the army. On the contrary, the failure of morale in the face of adversity was laid to the woeful neglect of the spiritual training of the average soldier; a new emphasis was required to place "politics in command."

The Maoist line in military affairs has implications both for military strategy and for internal policy. Unless one assumes that the Chinese expect to put their modest nuclear arsenal to use in the near future, one must suppose that their present nuclear development is an aspect more of political than of military strategy. It represents a defiance of the American-Soviet nuclear monopoly, and a demonstration of what China can do in the sphere of advanced technology. The Yenan concept of mass military organization also seems to involve a fundamentally defensive posture *vis-à-vis* a possible American attack. In the event of war, the Americans are to be drawn into the endless expanses of China and worn down in the course of a protracted people's war. This strategy does not preclude the use of Chinese arms abroad in situations where Chinese superiority is clear and great-power intervention unlikely—as in the case of the Chinese invasion of India. Nor does it imply that China may not intervene in Vietnam in the event of further escalation. It does, however, imply an effort to avoid rather than to seek a confrontation with American power.

Yet it must be stressed that the main significance of the Maoist military line may have lain in its application to internal affairs. Mao was determined not to retreat in the crucial military sector, and it was as the implementer of Mao's line in the army during the most critical period of 1959-1961 that Lin Piao was to lay the basis for his present ascendancy. Army loyalty is, of course, crucial in any state, but behind Mao's concern with the military lay an even deeper conviction harking back, once again, to the Yenan days. The Yenan experience had shown that a well-indoctrinated People's Army provided an ideal school for inculcating Communist virtues. If the spirit built into the guerrilla enterprise—a spirit of self-sacrifice, collectivity, simplicity, fortitude, and initiative—could be fostered and brought to high consciousness by zealous party cadres, then the average soldier and

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the average military unit could also become models of individual and collective behavior for the society as a whole. This vehement emphasis on spiritual training in the army might itself indicate that Mao had not really accepted the retreat of 1960 even in the cultural sphere and was already envisaging the possibility of turning the army into a model of Maoist conduct for the whole of Chinese society.

In fact, the entire period between 1961 and the present has been marked by a slow but steady accretion of all those themes and motifs which have now culminated in the "Cultural Revolution." I am not suggesting here that there was a prearranged, unfolding plan. At least in part, the growing vehemence and shrillness of this "cultural" effort may be directly due to the massive resistance which similar efforts have met from every quarter of society since the retreat from the "Great Leap Forward." As early as 1961, however, attempts were made to diagnose the failure of the "Great Leap Forward" in a manner which, though acknowledging the role of natural disasters and local mismanagement, still placed major blame on the failure to have imbued the masses with a true Communist ethic. Mao himself, it seems, had overestimated the spiritual preparedness of his people. What was required now was a longer, more sustained effort to internalize Mao's "proletarian" conception of man in the very souls of the masses. This effort began, as we have seen, in the military sector, but it was not until the Plenum of the Central Committee in September 1962 that the counterattack against "cultural" relaxation became plainly visible. (It may have been facilitated by the modest recovery brought about by the sober economic policies of the post-1960 period.) By 1963, we already have the slogan, "Learn from the People's Liberation Army." The work of Lin Piao's General Political Department in the army had been pronounced a success, and the army was now ready to play its role in the society at large. Men who had undergone a supposedly successful moral transformation while serving in the army were to be brought into every area of social life. The cultural department of the PLA was to play an increasingly important role in the arts.

THE YEARS 1963-64 also saw the emergence of two soldierly models of Communist virtue, Lei Feng and Wang Chieh, together with their conveniently available diaries. A perusal of these diaries and of the three "works" of Mao which are now stressed above all others (the "three much-read works"—"In Memory of Norman Bethune," "On Serving the People," and "On the Foolish Old Man who Removed the Mountains")—indicates that since 1962 the military, economic, and political doctrines of Mao Tse-tung have become less important than his sermons on the Communist moral transformation of the individual. Despite the inability of many Westerners—themselves profoundly habituated to thinking of human affairs in terms of institutional devices and social conditioning—to credit Mao's belief in the effectiveness of these moral sermons, it nevertheless appears that he has indeed committed himself to this program in a genuine and wholehearted manner.

Also in 1963, growing prominence began to be attributed to the campaign for "socialist education" in the countryside. Concern over the "spontaneous tendency to capitalism" inherent in the institution of private plots and free markets had probably been present for some time; indeed, there is evidence that in Mao's own province of Hunan, the effort to counteract this tendency had begun as early as 1960, and involved mobilizing those designated as "poor and lower-middle" peasants to attack all excessive commitments to private activities. It would appear that, in an adumbration of the later role of the "Red Guards," youngsters and schoolchildren were also employed in the work of ideological pressure. Although it is impossible to ascertain the precise nature and limits of this campaign, the institution of private plots—one which has played a crucial role in the Chinese economy—has still, so far as we know, not been abolished, despite the sustained effort at moral condemnation.

The "counterattack" in the more strictly intellectual sphere was also well under way by 1963, as historians and philosophers began to be excoriated for manifold bourgeois errors. Needless to say, a dominant theme in this whole Maoist cultural effort was that of Soviet decadence. The Soviet Union had by "negative example" proved the remarkable thesis that an "advanced social system alone cannot accomplish much without a revolutionary change in man himself" (Lao Chu, "The People's Communes Making Progress," *Hung Ch'i,* February 1964). In short, one can say that all the assumptions and essential themes underlying the present "Cultural Revolution" were on the scene by the beginning of 1965.

Yet, as we also know, the economic policies inaugurated after 1959 remain essentially intact even now. Has this hesitation to interfere with prevailing economic policies been due solely to a powerful resistance to change within the hierarchies of the party or the government? Or has Mao himself, after the failures of 1958, hesitated to launch new experiments in the economic area? While the assertion that the "revolutionization of the masses" will release enormous productive energies has been repeated again and again during the last few years, Mao himself may have accepted the fact that China's general economic development will actually be slow, and may hence have decided to concentrate upon laying the spiritual foundations of a Maoist society while leaving the economy alone. Technical experts were exhorted to base all their efforts on the "Thought" of Mao Tse-tung but to keep their minds steadily fixed on the actual task at hand. At any rate, the question

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of the relationship between "class struggle" in the cultural sphere and in economic practice is still unresolved.

In sum, then, I would suggest that the stage had already been set for recent developments by the beginning of 1965. Yet clearly there have been new developments since then. Are these new developments simply a spectacular culmination of the evolution described above, or have more recent events—particularly American large-scale intervention in Vietnam—played a crucial role? While the possibility of a war with the United States has never been overlooked, the actual prospect of imminent conflict became real only with the arrival of large numbers of American troops in Vietnam. It was quite conceivably this new prospect which reactivated the hidden debate on military strategy. In spite of constant assertions about the total success of the Maoist line in military policy, professional military opposition was far from dead. Indeed, the statement made by Chief of Staff Lo Jui-ch'ing in May 1965, entitled "Commemorate the Victory over German Fascism!" seems in retrospect of considerable significance.

This article praised the performance of the Soviet Red Army (hardly an army run on Maoist lines) during World War II and laid particular stress on its capacity "to destroy the enemy at his starting point, to destroy him in his nest." The article therefore also appeared to suggest that China itself requires a military apparatus capable of taking the offensive against an American enemy rather than simply waiting to wear him down in the heartland of China. It might also have suggested the possibility that China is willing to entertain the notion of limited cooperation with the Soviet Union in modernizing China's army and in taking a united stand against the U.S. in Vietnam. (It should be added, however, that this particular variety of professionalism and possible "pro-Sovietism" need have no "moderate" implications whatsoever for future Chinese-American relations.)

In any event, if such a debate on military strategy did indeed occur in the Chinese government, and if it involved wide circles of the governing elite, it would certainly have called to Mao's attention the degree to which there continues to be resistance—at least in one sector—to his program of spiritual transformation. It is clear, however, that Vietnam did not change Mao's own perspectives by one iota. Therefore, while the possibility of war with the United States may have intensified and exacerbated certain previously existing debates, and revealed the extent of the opposition to the "Thought of Mao Tse-tung," it did not change the terms of the debate itself. At most, it may have driven Mao further into that sense of exasperation which culminated in the "Cultural Revolution" of 1966.

It is also possible that resistance to Mao in 1965 may have manifested itself in fields other than that of military policy. The fact that the third five-year plan was to be launched in 1966 must have turned attention to economic matters. Mao's insistence on "culture" may not have seriously affected ongoing economic practices, but it certainly involved an enormous diversion of emotional and mental energies from economic concerns. In the sphere of education, for instance—an area vital to the economy—the increased emphasis on labor and on spiritual training represented a diversion of energies from the vocational training of experts. It is interesting to note that while the start of the five-year plan was announced in January 1966, the amount of attention devoted to economics in the public media since then has been minimal. It is quite likely that strong resistance was felt in this sphere as well, and that a man like P'eng Chen, who was happy to endorse the "revolutionization" of the Peking Opera, was less than enthusiastic about the even greater insistence on "Mao's Thought" in the spheres of economics and education.

From Mao's point of view, the most crucial area of all was the cultural one; here, too, there had been considerable evidence of resistance and foot-dragging on the part of all those party organs (aside from the army) concerned with cultural affairs. "Mao's Thought," to be sure, dominated the foreground, but the cultural "monsters and demons" who had revealed themselves during the 1960-62 period of relaxation were still on the scene. Now, as in the past, Mao has tended to seek primary symptomatic evidence of the health of Chinese society as a whole in the area of its culture—particularly its literature. Thus, the continued resistance of "bourgeois" tendencies in Chinese life to Mao's vision seems simply to have made the leader more grimly determined than ever to push through his own ideas. Lin Piao's famous tract of September 1965, "Long Live the Victory of People's War," and the all-out attack on the writer, Wu Han, which began in November 1965, may both be considered as aspects of this more vehement counterattack. Lin Piao's article is, of course, mainly an exposition of the Maoist analysis of world developments, but it must also be seen as a response to domestic critics. It consists of a grandiose application of the Yenan model to the world at large and projects a world situation favorable to the triumph of this model. Although uncompromising in spirit, however, it does not anticipate the export of Chinese armies to foster Maoist revolutions abroad. Rather, it assumes a third-world situation favorable to the spread of the Maoist model of revolution, or—on a more immediate level—the acceptance of Chinese leadership by established governments in many of the world's "poor countries." It emphasizes the importance of Vietnam as a test case of Maoist revolution but also stresses the need for

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Vietnamese self-reliance. Finally, it emphatically confirms the need to continue along Maoist military lines at home.

THE ATTACK on Wu Han was to be the direct antecedent of the "Cultural Revolution." Historian, vice-mayor of Peking, and part-time *littérateur*, he had written a play in the dark days of 1960 (published in 1961) with a historical setting in the Ming dynasty; the play has since been interpreted (probably correctly) as an assault on the "Great Leap Forward" experiment. In November of 1965, a decision was taken to make of Wu Han and his play a "negative example" of all that was wrong in the cultural sphere. Wu Han himself, however, had been closely connected to cultural figures in the Peking Party Committee machine headed by P'eng Chen; the attack may therefore have been merely a surface manifestation of the larger power struggle already taking place behind the scene. Or, if we credit the official account, it may have been launched in all sincerity, and then aggravated by the fact that the leadership of the Peking Party Committee failed to join in with the proper enthusiasm, thereby revealing its own bourgeois proclivities. There have, after all, been previous instances of the use of literary figures as "negative examples" (e.g., Hu Feng, Yu P'ing-po), without any evidence of titanic power struggles in the background.

In any case, whether it was the Wu Han affair which brought the leadership struggle to a head or whether the affair was a manifestation of a struggle already under way, it is clear that by Spring 1966 the power struggle was already visible. The nature of that struggle, however, was not yet apparent. Was it a horizontal struggle among different individuals and groups—and has Mao therefore been merely an instrument of the struggle itself? Was it a sheer power struggle, unrelated to issues? Or could it be described as a struggle between institutional entities such as the army and the party? The notion of a horizontal struggle for succession is based on the assumption that Mao himself has not played a decisive role in current events, or that he is a figurehead. My entire argument, on the other hand, has been grounded on the premise that now, as in the past, Mao has played a decisive role. Although he may at times withdraw himself expediently from the forefront of affairs, as he did in the early 60's, when he decides to bring his power to bear on any matter he does so with crushing weight. A most recent sensational revelation from a Japanese source cites a statement, presumably from Mao himself, that his authority within the party had been usurped by Liu Shao-ch'i, Teng Hsiao-p'ing, and others ever since the famous Wuhan meeting of December 1958, at which time he resigned his position as chairman of the CCP. Because of the convulsive conflict now raging in Peking, we must treat Mao's own accounts with as much skepticism as those of all other participants. There seems to be little doubt that Mao played a dominant role in the attack on P'eng Te-huai and the "Right opportunists" in 1959, and there is every reason to believe that he brought his full authority to bear on military policy during the 1960-62 period. Mao's style of thinking is stamped upon the whole Sino-Soviet conflict. It may well be, however, that the end of the "Great Leap Forward" was indeed marked by a more vociferous opposition in high councils to Mao's policies than had hitherto been the case, and that Mao has found it judicious on occasion to bow to his opposition on certain matters, particularly at moments of uncertainty on his own part. The charge that Liu, Teng, and others wholly usurped his infallible authority now constitutes another, particularly heinous, item in the list of charges being drawn up against them.

I would suggest therefore than Lin Piao occupies his present position because he has been promoted by Mao on the basis of his proved abilities as the implementer of the Maoist line in the army—not because he had recourse to a well-oiled political machine. Nor can Lin Piao's rise be considered part of the ascendancy of the "army" as such. He has made his fortune as the representative of the Maoist line, not as a representative of the "army" itself (that is, the officer corps), which, one gathers, is as internally divided as other institutional segments of society. Nor does Lin Piao represent the party. Indeed, the extent to which the whole "Red Guard" movement is being used as a power weapon by Mao and Lin against the established institutions of society argues for the view that Lin did not have a pre-established power base of his own. I would further suggest that T'ao Chu, the chairman of the South Central Bureau of the party, has also risen because of his proved merits as a servant of Mao's cultural policies, particularly in the sphere of "socialist education" in the countryside. As of now, however, we have the additional news that T'ao Chu himself is currently out of favor; here, one can only offer the suggestion that, with the mounting frenzy of the conflict, even those who have proved themselves worthy in the past may yet come to seem unreliable if they oppose certain of the more extreme developments of their leader's "Cultural Revolution." It is possible that T'ao Chu has placed himself in opposition to efforts at bringing the "Cultural Revolution" to bear within the economic realm itself. We are dealing with a situation in which it is quite possible to go astray by standing still.

As for those now in the opposition, all of them have been, at one time or another, faithful mouthpieces of Maoist policies. Cultural Commissar Chou Yang, for example, the scourge of China's writers since the early 40's, was always considered the spokesman of Mao's most Stalinist ideas in the realm of literature. P'eng Chen, until recently, was a leading spokesman on both domestic and foreign policy. Lo Jui-ch'ing, former chief of the

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secret police, had helped Lin Piao implement the Maoist line in the army during the early 60's. Needless to say, the past public statements of these men had always been designed to conform as closely as possible to the Communist convention of total unanimity.

It is true, however, that P'eng Chen Lo Jui-ch'ing, and Chou Yang had become closely associated with certain particular constellations of interests—P'eng Chen with the Peking Party Committee (which plays an extraordinarily important role in culture and higher education), Lo Jui-ch'ing with the officer corps, and Chou Yang with the culture and propaganda apparatus. The danger here did not lie simply in the creation of what Mao calls "independent kingdoms." Certainly, P'eng Chen's ample powers were not wholly dependent on the Peking Committee. But the day-to-day association with "authorities" involved in professional tasks may have dampened whatever ardor these men originally had for the ever more vehement emphasis on the "Thought of Mao Tse-tung," and may have resulted in giving them a new sense of solidarity with their professional protegés. Whether or not P'eng Chen truly sympathized with the writings of Wu Han, Ten T'o, and others, he might well have questioned the need for a whole campaign against them. Here questions of policy become hopelessly intertwined with questions of power.

It is, to be sure, somewhat difficult to think of Chou Yang as a defender of the professional writer or artist, yet these "cultural workers" have, in fact, constituted his "kingdom." He may be a literary Stalinist, but Mao's ideas on art and literature have gone well beyond the frontier of Stalinism. In spite of all his repressive measures, Stalin accepted the conventional "bourgeois" conception of the author and artist; Mao, of course, envisions a literature of "workers, peasants, and soldiers" written for immediate purposes. In practice, this means a kind of literature turned out by committees of trained propagandists. We know that in the last few years many theatrical and literary activities have been taken in hand by the Cultural Department of the General Political Department of the PLA, thus by-passing the jurisdiction of the conventional party cultural organs. It would seem plausible under these circumstances that even Chou Yang may have demonstrated something less than singlehearted dedication to Mao's "Cultural Revolution." It is, in fact, interesting to note that the main visible targets of the "Cultural Revolution" on the lower regional and provincial levels of party organization have been party functionaires, concerned with cultural and propaganda affairs. Foot-dragging, one would gather, has been a characteristic of the whole party cultural apparatus from top to bottom. This would also indicate that the issue of "culture," as Mao understands it, is at the heart of the present convulsion.

SOMETHING MUST BE said about the political survival of the durable Chou En-lai. Chou, it seem to me, continues to be an indispensable resource man. The Mao-Lin projection of the world's future may be based on profound faith in the verdict of history, but in the short run one must deal with the world situation as it is. One negotiates with Pakistan and seeks trade with Japan and attempts to exercise as much influence as possible under prevailing circumstances. Chou En-lai has always performed a crucial role in this area. His continued presence may also indicate that the forces which are determined to keep the "Cultural Revolution" and the "Red Guards" within some bounds are still vastly powerful and resistant.

What is suggested, therefore, is that there has probably not been an aggressive effort on the part of an opposition to seize power, but that ever since the early 60's there have been various forms and degrees of resistance to Mao's determined effort at placing his vision of man and society in the forefront of attention; that this resistance has manifested itself in all institutional sectors of Chinese society, including the party; and that this ongoing resistance (which may even have increased in 1965) has confirmed the aging Mao in his profound suspicion of the inertial "bourgeois" tendencies latent in all existing institutions and in all those involved with institutional responsibilities. One need not doubt that men like Teng Hsiao-p'ing, Liu Shao-ch'i, and P'eng Chen—men who had reason to cherish the highest private ambitions—must have deeply resented Lin Piao's ascendancy, but it seems to me quite impossible to separate the struggle for power from the issues involved.

The events leading up to the emergence of the "Red Guards" seem to have followed the major high-level purges. A new effort was now exerted to transform the soul of China and arm it against the forces of inertia. In June 1966, the West became aware of struggles within Peking University and other institutions of higher learning against "revisionist" academic administrators and students, struggles in which it was, of course, the young people who were mainly involved. It is evidently out of such struggles that the "Red Guards" emerged. Youth was to be rescued from the clutches of the revisionists—including those in control of the Communist Youth League—and made the bearer of the "Cultural Revolution." Only youth —particularly the very young—remained fresh and untainted. In spite of the continuing rhetoric about the masses, it would appear that the older and middle generations of these masses had proved themselves as susceptible as the institutional elites themselves to the corrupting pull of mankind's past.

If youth was to help revolutionize society, however, it had to undergo the actual experience of revolution. Here we note a theme which had emerged as early as 1964, when, in response to

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American assertions about the more reasonable, pragmatic nature of the coming generation in China, and to the ominous example of Soviet youth, a new set of slogans appeared: "Everything must be done to make the youth succeed to the revolutionary heritage of the past." "One can learn to swim only by swimming [a slogan which reminds us of Mao's symbolic swim in the Yangtze]; one can learn to be revolutionary only by making revolution." One might say that the ethos of revolution is itself the ethos of Communism. Thus, the activities of the "Red Guards" represent, among other things, an effort to create within a vastly different environment a substitute for the revolutionary experiences of Mao's generation. This whole movement is soaked in nostalgic allusions to the difficult yet golden days of the 30's and 40's. Such phrases as "little general" and "Red Guards" themselves refer back to the charming waifs who were attached to the Red Army during the old guerrilla days and who served that army with selfless devotion.

THE "RED GUARD" movement thus serves many purposes. It is used as a lever of power by Mao and Lin Piao against the resistant elements which permeate all the institutions of society. The enthusiasm and intolerance of the young are to be used to convey to the society at large the purest and most exclusivist image of Mao's vision of man and society. Finally, the "Red Guard" movement provides the young with an unforgettable revolutionary experience. One should not make too much of the notion that the "Red Guards" are the auxiliaries of Lin's thoroughly transformed People's Liberation Army. In fact, the army leadership continues to be as suspect a sector of the elite as any other, and there have been many reports of local army resistance to the "Red Guards." For the moment, the "Red Guards" represent the only full incarnation of the proletarian spirit.

As of now, there seems little reason to believe that the conflicts occasioned by the "Cultural Revolution" have been resolved, nor is it by any means clear what its ultimate implications may be in the economic sphere. There are those who feel that Mao is once more preoccupied with mobilizing the people to "get the economy moving." But while there is no doubt that Mao ardently desires rapid economic development, I would suggest that even he learned in the course of 1958 that it is no easy matter to translate "Mao's Thought" into immediate economic results. It is thus not unlikely that his main immediate concern is not primarily with the economy, but rather with the saturation of his people's minds with his own vision of the good society, even if this does not lead to spectacular, immediate economic results. One need not expect Russian-type "Libermanism" in China, but neither is it yet clear that "Mao's Thought" must lead to a "Great Leap" type of economic experimentation in the immediate future although there are now more and more indications that the leader wants to carry the activities of the "Red Guards" into the countryside and factories.

In the sphere of world politics, Mao's vision, in spite of its "radical nature," does not involve a more aggressive military posture. The world, to be sure, has not yet conformed to the Maoist projection, but the Yellow River has many bends. In the end, the Maoist model of revolution and of the good society will prove infectious in an unstable Third World. Meanwhile, China must offer this world a model of the good society, clearly marked off from that of the corrupt West.

Will Mao's ideas ultimately prevail? It seems to me that his terribly simple and constricted view of the human situation will prove as inapplicable to the human reality of China as to that of any other society, and that the forces resistant to his more extravagant dreams (forces which may represent a wide diversity of outlooks) will in the end prevail. Mao may not be totally deluded in believing that a society with a vast peasant population and many of its own cultural propensities will have to find its own path into the future. The China of the future may be radically different from the United States and the Soviet Union. But it is not very likely to resemble Mao's utopia either.

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FOR A CHANGE IN MOOD

MANY YEARS AGO when telephones were very new, Herman Goldman had one installed in his Grand Street Store.

Then the telephone installer told him how to use it: "First turn the crank with one hand, and with the other hand, hold the receiver to your ear!"

"So how do you expect me to talk?"

For a change in taste

TURN TO SALEM

For a taste that's Springtime Fresh!

Salem brings you rich tobacco taste... menthol soft flavor. That's what makes Salem America's largest selling menthol cigarette by far. Next pack, turn to Salem. Salem *refreshes* your taste!

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THE ROVER MOTOR CO. OF N. AMERICA LTD., CHRYSLER BLDG., NEW YORK, N.Y. 10017

[How to get your children to fasten their Rover 2000 safety harnesses]

Tell them how you had to walk five miles to school, in the snow, and that you weren't *fortunate* enough to have a Rover 2000 T.C. Sports Sedan ( ); and that your every waking thought, yours and mommy's, is of them, and all you are working for is to give them the advantages you never had; and that if they don't fasten them, you will blister

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TADEUSZ BOROWSKI

THE PEOPLE WHO WALKED

A Story

WE STARTED by building a soccer field in the empty meadow behind the hospital barracks. The meadow was nicely situated. On the left, the camp for the gypsies, with its crowds of hovering children and its pretty, well-groomed nurses; in the back a wire fence, then the ramp alongside the railway tracks—always jammed with the freightcars. Beyond the ramp, the women's camp, which we called by the initials FKL.* On the right side of the meadow, the crematoria: some were just beyond the ramp, next to the FKL, others were nearer, right by the wire fence. Strong buildings set solidly on the earth. Beyond the crematoria was a tiny grove and a small white house.

It was spring when we built the soccer field; even before we finished, we started to sow flower beds and to pave the paths with broken red bricks. We also planted spinach and lettuce, sunflowers and garlic. With turf from the soccer field we laid small squares of lawn. Each day we had to bring several full barrels from the lavatory to water all the stuff we had planted. By the time the plants were growing, the soccer field was ready.

After that, the plants grew by themselves, the sick stayed alone in the hospital block, and we played soccer. Every evening, after supper had been distributed, whoever felt like it would come out to the field and kick the ball around. Others would gather at the wire fence and call out to the women in the FKL across the railway track.

One Sunday I was playing goal; a large crowd of *Pfleger*† and convalescents was standing around the field, men were running back and forth after each other and after the ball. I stood at the goal, with my back to the ramp. The ball went out of bounds and rolled over to the wire fence; I ran after it and as I picked it up, I looked at the ramp. A train had just rolled in. People began stepping down from the freightcars and walking toward the grove. From that distance, all I could see were the colorful splotches of their clothes. They were dressed for summer—for the first time that season. The men took off their jackets, and their white shirts shone. The procession moved at a slow pace, constantly joined by more and more people from the cars. Finally, it came to a stop. A few people sat down on the grass and looked our way. I went back to the soccer field with the ball and kicked it out among the players. It went from leg to leg and then came back to the goal in a wide arc. I kicked it into the corner. It rolled across the grass and again I went to get it. Picking up the ball from the grass, I looked up and stood, thunderstruck; the ramp was empty. Of the whole crowd of those colorfully-dressed people, not a single one remained. The freightcars were gone too. One could see across to the FKL blocks without hindrance. The *Pfleger* stood, as before, at the wire fence and shouted their greetings to the girls who shouted back from the other side of the ramp.

I returned with the ball and kicked it out once more. Between my first and second boot, they had gassed three thousand people behind my back.

AFTERWARD, more people began walking along the two roads leading into the wood: the road straight from the ramp and the second one, on the other side of the hospital. They both led to the crematorium, but some people were lucky enough to go farther, as far as the Sauna, which for them meant not only the steam bath, the delousing, the shaving, the old rags, but also life. A life in the camp—but a life. In the morning, after I got up to wash the floors, more people were already walking along the two roads. Men, women, and children, carrying their bundles.

As I was sitting down to dinner, people were still walking along one road or the other. Sunshine flooded the barracks; we opened the doors and windows wide and sprinkled the floor to keep the dust down. In the afternoon I went to the storehouse to fetch the parcels that had been brought that morning from the main post office of the camp. At the barracks, the clerk distributed the letters, and the doctors treated wounds and gave injections—using a single syringe for the

TADEUSZ BOROWSKI, one of Poland's leading postwar writers of fiction and poetry, died by his own hand in 1951, after having survived several years as a political prisoner in Nazi concentration camps, and after having recorded his experiences there in a number of brilliantly realistic stories. In July 1962, COMMENTARY published his "This Way For the Gas." The present story has been translated from the Polish by MIWA ZIELINSKI.

* In German, *Frauen Konzentrationslager*—ED.

† Hospital attendants—ED.

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whole block. In the warm evening I sat in the doorway of the barracks and read *Mon Frère Yves* by Pierre Loti. And still the people walked—along one road or the other.

SOME EVENINGS I would walk out in front of the barracks. The lamps above the wires shone in the darkness. The road could not be seen in the night, but I heard the noise of many thousands of people as they walked and walked. The fire rose above the woods, lighting up the sky, and together with the fire rose the human cries. Staring into the depths of the night, I stood petrified, without a word, without a move. Against my will, my whole body shuddered. I had no control over it, but I felt every shudder. I was calm, yet my whole body was in revolt.

Soon after, they took me from the hospital block to the camp. The days were full of great events. The Allied armies had landed on the French coast. The Russian front was going to be rolled back as far as Warsaw. But in our camp, every day and every night, the long freight trains loaded with people stopped and waited at the station. Then the doors would open and the people would start walking.

Next to our labor camp stood Section C, empty and still unfinished. Only the barracks were ready, and the live-wire fences around them. There was no tarpaper on the roof yet, and some of the barracks had no bunks. Elsewhere in the camp, our horse-stable barracks with their three-decker bunks could house up to five hundred people; in Section C they jammed more than a thousand girls into each of the barracks. Twenty-eight barracks and more than thirty thousand women. Their heads were shaved to the skin and they were dressed in sleeveless summer clothes with no underwear; they didn't own a spoon, or a bowl, or a rag to wipe themselves with. Birkenau* was situated on a swamp in the foothills. During the day, one could see the hills clearly through the transparent air, but very early in the morning the hills swam in mist and seemed to be covered with white frost; the air was very cold and soaked with moisture. For us, these mornings offered a refreshing contrast to the heat of midday; but the women who had to stand at attention, waiting for a roll-call from five in the morning, were blue with cold and huddled together like a flock of partridges.

We dubbed Section C "The Persian Market." When the weather was fine, the women would come out of the blocks. From a distance their vivid summer dresses and the kerchiefs covering their heads gave the impression of a garish, lively, noisy marketplace. It looked exotic—almost Persian. From a distance the women were all faceless and ageless—merely bright spots and pastel figures.

The Persian Market was still being finished. The Wagner *Kommando* was building a road and their huge steamroller drove over the stones, crushing them to pieces. Others were working on the sewer system and lavatories that were just being installed throughout Birkenau. Pallets, blankets, and metal dishes were continually brought in and carefully stored away by the SS man in command. Not all of them, however. Some disappeared directly into the camp, stolen by the people who were working there. In fact, that was the only useful thing about these blankets and dishes; one could steal them right away.

It was my companions and I who roofed the barracks in the Persian Market, with "organized" (stolen) tarpaper and tar. We were not following orders nor were we moved by pity. Nor did we do it out of solidarity with the camp nurses from the FKL who took over the administration of the new section. No, every roll of tarpaper, every pail of tar had to be paid for. The *Kapos*, the *Kommando*-chief, the other *Kommando* leaders were paid in various ways: gold, food, women from the block, the nurses themselves. Whatever they could manage to pay. In the same way as we, the electricians, agreed to fix the lights, the carpenters agreed to make partitions, benches, and so forth with "organized" lumber, the masons to bring in iron stoves and place them where necessary.

IN TIME I got to know the face of this strange community. Every morning we would arrive at the camp, pushing carts piled with tar and tarpaper; at the gates stood the women guards, broad-hipped blondes in high boots, who would inspect us and let us in; later they would come inside to inspect the barracks. Many of them had taken lovers among the masons and the carpenters, and would go with them into the unfinished lavatories and shacks. We would drive to the center of the camp, make a fire, and start boiling the tar. In an instant we would be surrounded by the women from the camp, begging for a penknife, a handkerchief, a spoon, a pencil, a piece of paper, a piece of bread.

"You men, you can do anything," they said, "You've been living in this camp so long and you're still alive. You must have everything. Share it with us." At first we gave away everything we had and turned our pockets inside out. But after a time, we chose to come emptyhanded and give away nothing more.

These females were not at all alike, as we had supposed. There were little girls with uncut hair who looked like cherubim in a scene of the Last Judgment. There were young girls amazed by the women who crowded around us coarse, brutal males. There were women who implored us for news about their husbands, and mothers who kept describing their children to us in the hope that we might have seen them.

"We're suffering, and cold, and hungry," they said. "Are our children any better off?"

*Auschwitz consisted of a number of separate camps, of which Birkenau was one—ED.

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"They're certainly better off, if a just God exists," we would answer seriously, without our customary joking and jeering.

"They're not dead, are they?" the women would ask, searching our eyes. We would leave them in silence and hurry to work.

THE BLOCK-GUARDS at the Persian Market were Slovak women who understood the prisoners' language. They had years of the camp behind them; they remembered the early days of the FKL when the women's corpses had lain heaped up against each barrack or rotting in the hospital beds, and human excrement had accumulated in monstrous piles around the blocks.

For all of their outward harshness, they retained a certain feminine softness. Through their lovers they would steal margerine and preserves to offer in exchange for extra blankets or dresses for the other women. I remember Mirka, a short, plump girl, who seemed to be all pink. The shack she lived in was pink, with pink curtains hanging in the single window that faced the block. The air in the shack seemed to reflect the pink light, and inside it she looked as if she were enclosed in a delicate pink veil. A Jew with a broken tooth from our *Kommando* was in love with her. He used to buy eggs all over the camp, wrap them very securely, and throw them to her over the electrified wires. He spent hours with Mirka, paying no attention to the SS women or to our boss, who stalked about the place with a huge revolver at his side.

One day, Mirka came running toward the roof we were working on and beckoned to the Jew. "You come down too!" she called to me. "Maybe you'll be able to help." We slid down from the roof. She caught us by the hands and, pulling us along with her, led us into one of the barracks. There on the floor, between two bunks, a child lay asleep on a mattress piled with patchwork quilts.

"Look, the baby may die any minute! Tell me what to do! Why did it get sick so suddenly?"

"What a pretty child," I whispered.

"Pretty!" exclaimed Mirka. "Of course it's pretty, but it may die. I must keep it hidden or else they'll take it to the gas. The SS women may discover it any minute. Please help me!" She began to sob.

I shrugged and left her with the Jew. I had nothing to do there.

In the distance you could see the freightcars moving along the ramp. They were bringing more people to walk on the road by the hospital. One detachment of *Kanada** was just coming back from the ramp when it passed a second detachment on its way to relieve it. Beyond the woods a cloud of smoke rose in the sky. I sat down by the kettle of boiling tar and thought for a long time. Suddenly I surprised myself by the thought that I would like to have such an infant, with pink cheeks and beautiful hair spread out on a pillow. I laughed at this preposterous wish and climbed back up on the roof to lay the tarpaper.

There was another block-guard, a tall, red-haired wench with broad feet and red hands. She had no cabin, and hung a few blankets around her bed as a partition. "It's not that I'm trying to shut them out," she would say, gesturing at the inmates who were packed in, several to a bunk. "I can't give them anything, but I won't take anything away from them either." Once in the middle of one of our chitchats she asked abruptly: "Do you believe in life after death?"

"Sometimes," I answered. "I believed it once in prison and once in the camp when I thought I was going to die."

"And if a man is evil, he will be punished, won't he?"

"He will, unless there are other standards of justice than the human ones. You know, hidden inner motives, or the irrelevance of guilt in relation to the ultimate meaning of the world, or the question of whether a crime committed in one realm of being can be punished in another."

"Oh, talk simply," she said, "Talk like a plain human being!"

"Then it should obviously be punished."

"And do you believe in being kind? I mean personally?"

"Personally, I'm not looking to be rewarded. I cover the roofs and try to survive."

"And what about them"—she gestured vaguely. "Shouldn't the Germans be punished?"

"I think that mere justice isn't enough for people who suffer unjustly. They'd want to see the guilty suffering unjustly. Only that would be justice for them."

"You're clever all right!" she said. Then moving away, she added, "But you wouldn't know how to distribute a kettle of soup without giving more to your girlfriend."

THE WOMEN lay on the three-decker bunks, head to head, their huge eyes shining in their expressionless faces. There was hunger now in camp. The red-headed block-woman strolled among the bunks and talked to the inmates. To keep them from brooding, she roused the singers and made them sing; the dancers and made them dance; still others she got to recite poetry.

"They keep asking me where their mothers and fathers are. They ask me to write to them."

"They ask me too." I shrugged. "What can I do?"

"Oh, you can come and go, but what about me? I plead with the sick ones to stay in the block, with the pregnant ones not to go to the doctor. Do you think they believe me? Can I help them if they rush to the gas by themselves?"

A girl had stood up on the stove and was sing-

* The camp detail whose job it was to unload the freightcars filled with prisoners arriving in the camp—ED.

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ing a popular hit. When she finished, the women in the bunks began to clap and the girl bowed and smiled. The red-headed guard gave me a despairing look.

"I can't stand it any longer! It's simply revolting!" she hissed.

"Get down," she shouted at the girl, and climbed up on the stove herself.

The block was suddenly silent. The block-woman raised her hand. "All right, quiet!" she shouted, though no one had said a word. "You've asked me where your parents and children are. I didn't tell you because I was sorry for you. Now I'll tell you, so you'll know what happens if you get sick. Your children, husbands, and parents are not in another camp. They pushed them into a cellar and choked them with gas. Do you understand? With gas! Like millions of others. Like my own parents! They burn people in piles and in the crematoria. That smoke you see is not from a brick factory, as you were told. It's from your children. And now, go on singing!" she said to the frightened girl. Then she jumped down from the stove, and walked away.

As EVERYONE knows, the conditions at Auschwitz went from worse to better. At first, the prisoners were constantly being beaten and killed, but later this happened only once in a while. At first they slept on the floor and had to turn from one side to the other on command; then they slept in bunks, in whatever position they liked; finally, each of them even had a bed to himself. At first people might have to stand at roll-call for two days straight, then only until nine in the morning. In the first years, parcels were forbidden, then they allowed each prisoner a package weighing up to a pound, and later as many parcels as he could get. At first, prisoners were forbidden to have pockets in their uniforms, later they could even take off their stripes and wear civilian clothes. After three or four years in the camp, life was still getting "better and better." The worse the Germans fared on the front, the better it was in camp. And the Germans kept faring worse and worse.

But in the Persian Market, time went backward, until we saw once more the Auschwitz of 1940: the women, stinking of sweat and blood, greedily lapping up a soup that no one else would touch. They stood at roll-call from five o'clock until nine in the morning before they were counted, then they might get some cold coffee, and at three in the afternoon a piece of bread spread with something. Every so often the SS women would herd them out of the barracks for an additional roll-call. The women would be made to stand in tight rows, five abreast, while the blonde guards in their high boots picked out from among them the skinny, the ugly, the very pregnant—and cast them into the middle of what was called "the eye." This was a group of women guards who stood in a circle holding hands. Gradually the circle would fill up with women and then slowly, like a macabre dance, move toward the gate of the camp, where it joined the "eyes" from other blocks. Five, six hundred, a thousand women would be picked up in this manner and would later walk on the road.

Sometimes an SS woman would come to the block and look around the bunks—a woman looking at women. Who would like to see a doctor? she would ask. Who is pregnant? For them, she said, there would be milk and white bread. Some of the women would get down from the bunks; off they would go to the gate, and then onto that road.

All of which did not discourage us from spending our free time goldbricking in the Persian Market, fooling around with the women guards. They would give you a cup of tea, or let you snatch an hour's nap in a comfortable bed. Around the barracks you could also shoot the breeze with the masons and carpenters. There were always women hanging around them, most of whom were now dressed in sweaters and stockings. Give them a stitch of clothing, and they would let you do anything you wanted. Never in the history of Birkenau had there been such an abundance of females.

The privies for men and women were separated by only a wooden partition. On the women's side—crowds and pandemonium; on our side—peace and a pleasant coolness from the cement walls and floors. We could spend hours on end there, flirting with Katya, a cute little cleaning girl. Nobody was embarrassed. Too much had already been seen in the camp.

So June passed. Meanwhile day and night, the people walked on the road. From dawn till late at night, all of the Persian Market might stand at roll-call. The days were hot and the tar melted on the roofs. Then came rains and sharp winds, and the mornings were piercingly cold. Then the fine weather returned. But the freightcars continued to pull up at the ramp without interruption, the people went on walking. Some mornings on our way to work we had to stop and wait for them to pass because they were blocking both roads. They walked slowly, in casual groups, holding each other by the hand. Old men, women, children. They walked on the road behind the wire fence and turned their silent faces toward us. Women would take off their watches and fling them under our feet, indicating that they were for us. An orchestra at the gate played foxtrots and tangos, and the camp gazed at the people who walked.

MEN HAVE ONLY a limited range of reactions to experience. The great emotions and violent passions are expressed in the same manner as everyday events, in the same common words.

"How many of them have come through! It's two months since the middle of May—counting

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twenty thousand per day, that's nearly a million!"

"They didn't gas that many every day, and besides, how do you know? Damn it, four crematoria and several pits. . . ."

"All right, you can count this way. From Kosyce and Munkac in Hungary, that's nearly sixty thousand. From Budapest, three hundred thousand. Right?"

"What do you care?"

"But it has to be finished soon. Even if they kill every single one."

"Don't worry, there are enough."

You shrug and look at the road. Behind the crowd of people, several SS men walk slowly and with benevolent smiles encourage them to move along, to believe that they have reached their destination. A small elderly man receives a tap on the shoulder and runs hurriedly toward a ditch; he pulls down his pants and squats. The SS man then points to the marching people. The old man nods, pulls up his pants, and runs to join the crowd.

It seems very amusing to watch someone who is in such a hurry to get to the gas chamber.

AFTER THEY pass, we go to patch the leaking roof of the storehouse. There are huge piles of clothing and unpacked bundles. The valuables taken from the people who walked are lying on top, unprotected. We make a fire under the cauldron of tar and go inside to "organize." One has brought a pail of water, another a bag of dried cherries or prunes, another some sugar. So we make stewed fruits and carry them up to the roof for those who have kept up the pretense of working steadily. Some of the men have fried bacon with onions and eat it with corn bread. We have stolen whatever was handy and carried it with us into the camp.

From the roof there is an excellent view of the burning stacks of corpses and of the gas chambers. The crowd is marched inside and undresses; promptly, the SS men then lower the windows and screw them tightly shut. A few minutes later—in less time than it takes to spread the tar on a sheet of tarpaper—they open the doors and the windows to let in fresh air. A special *Kommando* comes to drag the fresh corpses to the stacks.

And so it went from morning till night, each day anew. After a whole transport had been gassed, a few trucks might arrive with the sick and the nurses. Since it was too much trouble to gas them, they would be stripped naked and *Oberscharführer Moll would shoot them with his rifle or* push them alive into the burning ditch.

When there was no more room left in the Persian Market, the gypsy camps, and the FKL, the authorities set up another camp for women in front of the Persian Market. We called it "The Mexico." It too was unfinished, so again we had to install lights, glaze windows, and build shacks for the block-guards. Those in the camp continued to have their worries: waiting for parcels and letters from home, "organizing" for friends and lovers, creating all sorts of intrigues. But night still followed day and rain came after drought.

Toward the end of summer, the trains stopped running and fewer and fewer people walked to the gas chambers. At first we missed the crowds, but soon got used to the empty roads. Besides, important new events were breaking—the Russian offensive, the uprising in Warsaw, then the burning of the city. New transports left the camp for unknown destinations in the West, unknown deaths. Then came the revolt in one of the crematoria, the flight of the special *Kommando,* and the final shooting of all those who had attempted to escape.

And afterward, they threw us from camp to camp, without a spoon, or a bowl, or a rag we could call our own.

THE HUMAN memory retains images best. Today, when I think about that final summer in Auschwitz, I see the endless, colorful crowd of people solemnly walking on the one and the other road; I see the women standing above the burning ditch. Against the dark interior of the barracks I see the red-headed girl as she calls to me impatiently: "So will they be punished? But say it simply, like a plain human being!" And I see also the Jew with the broken teeth as he comes to my bunk every evening, his head lifted, always asking the same question: "Did you get a parcel today? Would you sell me some eggs for Mirka? I'll pay you well . . . she likes eggs so much. . . ."

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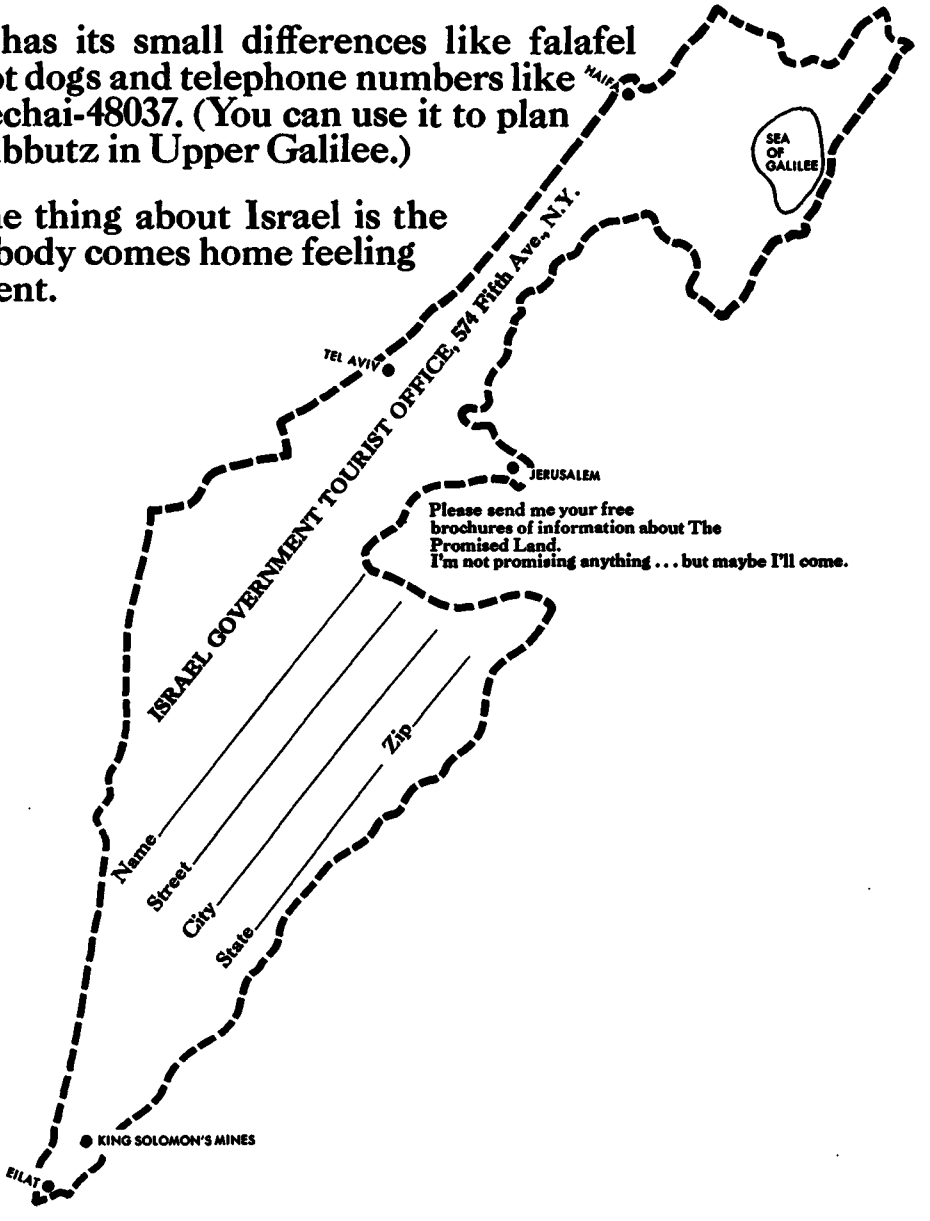
But one thing about Israel is the same: everybody comes home feeling a little different.



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LOVE MYSTIFIED: A CRITIQUE OF NORMAN O. BROWN*

Herbert Marcuse

. . . sie hätte singen
nicht reden sollen diese neue Seele
—Stefan George, "Nietzsche"

FOR HERE IS the "new soul," prophet of the new man—radical break with the past and with the present which is still the rule of the past. And this past is the archetypal one, in the individual as well as in the history of the species: the primal crime and the primal scene. Psychoanalysis in its most extreme and most advanced concepts guides Brown's interpretation of the history of men and of the human condition. Brown likes to quote Adorno: "In psychoanalysis, only the exaggerations are true." For only the exaggerations can shatter the normal complacency of common sense and scientific sense and their comforting limitations and illusions. Only the exaggerations can (perhaps), with the violence of a shock, elucidate the horror of the whole, the depth of the deception, and the incommunicable promise of a future which can come into being (can come into thought) only as the total annihilation of the past and present. Apocalypse and Pentecost: destruction of everything and the redemption of everything: final liberation of the repressed content —abolition of the reality principle, nay, abolition of reality. For what we call reality Brown calls illusion, lie, dream. We are asleep, and being asleep is being dead; we still live in the womb or return into the womb; our genital sexuality is regression to the state before birth; and we are still under the spell of the primal scene: we reenact the father whom we have introjected; our sex life is his, not ours, and our pleasure remains vicarious. Thus if all our life is dream and illusion, then the awakening to real life is the end of our life: death and resurrection in one. The way out of the womb, out of the dream cave is to die in order to be reborn.

Liberation is transubstantiation; resurrection of the body, but the body is "raised a spiritual or symbolic body" (p. 191). "The revolution, the revelation, the apocalypse, is vision; which pronounces a last judgment; and brings about the end" (p. 232). The cave and the womb, Plato and Freud, revolution and revelation, Marx and Christ: the grand union and communion of opposites, the overcoming of all division between male and female, self and outside world, thine and mine, body and spirit—this ultimate reconciliation of opposites, does it convey the image of liberation? Or is it again the past that asserts its power over the image of the future, the old in new clothes? The attempt to answer this question involves heavy responsibility, for Norman Brown has carried the burden of radical thought to the farthest point: the point where sanity must appear as madness, where concepts must turn into fantasies, and the truth must become ridiculous. Once again, the tragedy of man as comedy, as the play of Satyre. Norman Brown's book moves along the limits of communication; he is on the search for a new language, which can break through the falsifying, stultifying, repressive universe of ordinary and academic discourse ("senatorial and senile"). In its best parts, this book is a poem and a song, of the beauty which is *nichts als des Schrecklichen Anfang, den wir noch grade ertragen. . . .*"† The form of the sentence, the proposition which freezes the content is abandoned; the words, freed from the enchaining form, recapture their explosive meaning, a hidden truth.

The normal flux of ordinary and academic discourse is also broken —the argument is developed in relatively self-sufficient fragments, short paragraphs, aphorisms; their inner connection, the flow of the argument is of a musical rather than conceptual order: variations on a theme, progress through repetition, dissonance as element of structural harmony and development. The right of the imagination as cognitive power is thus restored: released from its senatorial and senile garb, thought becomes play, *jeu interdit,* the scandal; the *esprit de sérieux* gives way to the *gaya sciencia,* drunkenness and laughter. Hegel, the most serious of all serious philosophers, knew it well:

> The true is thus the bacchanalian whirl in which no member is not drunken; and because each, as soon as it detaches itself, dissolves immediately—the whirl is just as much transparent and simple repose.**

But then comes the hangover; the imagination falters, and the new language looks for support in the old. Support in quotations and references, which are to demonstrate or at least to illustrate the points made; support in returning to the primordial, elemental, subrational; to the infantile stages in the development of the individual and of the species. Psychoanalysis changes its direction and function: the latent content, the unconscious and its prehistory, serve not only as powers to be recognized, comprehended, conquered, but also (and increasingly so in the unfolding of the argument) as normative values, as ends. The grand leap into the realm of freedom and light is thus arrested and becomes a leap backward, into darkness.

NORMAN BROWN'S demonstrations and illustrations have yet another and very different significance. A large bulk of his references is to Holy Script, to Christ and his gospel. A few examples may show how central these references are:

* Norman O. Brown, *Love's Body,* Random House, 267 pp. $5.95.

† "Nothing but the beginning of terror we can just barely endure . . ."—Rilke, *Duino Elegies* (the translation is by C. F. MacIntyre)—ED.

** Preface to the *Phenomenology of the Spirit,* translated by Walter Kaufmann, in *Hegel,* Doubleday, p. 424.

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The conclusion of the whole matter is, break down the boundaries, the walls. Down with defense mechanisms, character-armor; disarmament. Ephesians II, 14 . . . (p. 149).

The real world . . . is the world where thoughts are omnipotent, where no distinction is drawn between wish and deed. As in the New Testament . . . (p. 151).

The solution to the problem of identity is, get lost. Or as it says in the New Testament . . . (p. 161).

The solution to the problem of war in the Eucharist with transubstantiation . . . (p. 173).

But the unconscious is the true psychic reality; and the unconscious is the Holy Spirit . . . (p. 195).

Real life is life after death, or resurrection . . . Colossians III, 3 . . . (p. 207).

Fulfillment gathers up the past into the present in the form of a recapitulation: that in the dispensation of times there might be a recapitulation of all things in Christ . . . (p. 207).

Then cometh the end, when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world. I Corinthians XV, 24 . . . (p. 243).

Now Brown takes great pains to state again and again that the religious symbolism is to be interpreted symbolically, in the other direction, as it were. Sexual potency is restored at Pentecost; speech resexualized (p. 251); knowledge made carnal, copulation of subject and object (p. 249); and the spirit is phallic (p. 224)—merger of Christ and Dionysus. But the one stays with the other, and the new emphasis does not suffice to reverse the established direction: sexualization of the spirit is also spiritualization of sexuality, and sexuality itself becomes symbolic: "everything is symbolic, including the sexual act" (p. 131). Behind the veil of Brown's sexualized language, desexualization prevails. The orgasm provides only "vicarious gratification" (p. 129). Brown's consistent attempt to convey, against overwhelming odds, the new non-repressive interpretation of the old repressive symbols cannot undo the association of the spirit with the Spirit, the resurrection of the body with the Resurrection. Brown's images of fulfillment suggest total sublimation which drains the unsublimated dimension. Liberation in Nirvana: I like to believe that Norman Brown was aware of this goal of his voyage, and that he communicated his awareness to the reader: his first chapter is headed "Liberty" and his last, "Nothing."

Before examining the reasons for this failure, I shall review briefly the radical origin and intent of Brown's analysis prior to their mystification.

THE TRUTH OF the human condition is hidden, repressed—not by a conspiracy of some sort, but by the actual course of history. The first aim, therefore, is the critical destruction of history, and of the manner in which history is written and understood. The facts stand for other facts in the depth of the individual and collective unconscious, and the repressed prehistory of mankind continues to make the history of man. The established facts are symbolic facts, derivatives and distortions of the latent content, which is the unexpurgated drama of sexuality. Consequently, history must be explained symbolically. All literal interpretation of history is falsification; the "modern historical consciousness is Protestant literalism which offends against the spirit, kills the spirit. Thus it becomes an "operation with ghosts (*Geisteswissenschaft*)" (p. 198 *ff.*). "We must rise from history to mystery" (p. 214)—here is the first mystification in Brown's analysis: the "mystery" is initially that of the primal crime and the ambivalent penitence for it; but then the mystery becomes that of the resurrection and redemption, transubstantiation, the Eucharist. The radical destruction of history terminates in the religious tale, in which history is, not *aufgehoben*, but simply negated, abolished. The beginning of Brown's book contained a very different promise: the refusal to accept any mystification, and the resolution to call things by their name, their real name, instead of canceling all names in the impossible unity and union of everything.

In line with this promise, Brown begins with the symbolic interpretation of politics:

> In order to know the reality of politics we have to believe the myth, to believe what we were told as children. Roman history is the story of the brothers Romulus and Remus, the sons of the she-wolf; leaders of gangs of juvenile delinquents . . .; who achieved the rape of the Sabine women; and whose festival is the Lupercalia; at which youth naked except for girdles made from the skin of victims ran wild through the city; . . . a season fit for killing. *Julius Caesar,* Act I (p. 15).

And Brown continues, summing up the initial exposition: "Politics made out of delinquency. All brothers are brothers in crime; all equal as sinners" after the killing of the father, whom they restored in themselves and whom they continue to obey, the killing of each other. Myth or reality? Fictitious past, or factual history that is still with us? The stuff out of which history is made—the stuff of greatness and progress: Brown quotes Livy:

> To expand the population, Romulus followed the model of other founders of cities: he opened an asylum for fugitives. The mob that came in was the first step to the city's future greatness. . . .

The City of Man—"a sanctuary" providing "immunity for a multitude of criminals" (Augustine). Here is the latent content in the notion of the social contract:

> The social contract establishes corporate virtue as an asylum for individual sin, making a moral society out of immoral men; men whose natural inclination, according to Hobbes and Freud, is murder (p. 16).

The foundation of the state is itself a crime, the primal crime, for the state is formed by the fraternity (here, Brown sides with Plato and Sparta as against Aristotle and Athens), and it is the common crime that creates common solidarity—political, national solidarity. And after the primal crime, the endless struggle among the brothers—the "quarrel over the paternal

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inheritance": the original unity of the body politic now is divided into a multitude of segments, "moieties"; each acquiring private property, a self, group or individual self, fighting. Law only organizes this fight: "the Rule of Law is the Rule of Force"; and, as the classical myths tell us, right and wrong can be decided only "by an appeal to heaven, that is, by war and violence" (p. 18). The division stays with us: history is fratricide after the parricide. "Political parties are conspiracies to usurp the power of the father" (p. 29); behind politics is the ritual of murder and sacrifice:

> The comic wearing of the Indian mask, in the Boston Tea Party, or Tammany's Wigwam, is the lighter side of a game, a ritual, the darker side of which is fraternal genocide (p. 30).

Brown then traces the development of the latent content in the historical step from absolute monarchy to representative government, from Hobbes to Locke. A step within the same continuum of fraud. The illusion in liberty and equality:

> Locke allows no man the status of father, and makes all men sons of the Heavenly Father. . . . Sonship and brotherhood are espoused against fatherhood: but without a father there can be no sons or brothers. Locke's sons, like Freud's, cannot free themselves from father psychology . . . (pp. 4-5).

The father survives in the superego, and in the many new political leaders, now freely elected. The autonomous individual, the "person"—this cherished achievement of bourgeois society is a fraud, Hobbes's "artificial Person." In reality, a person is never himself but always another: he wears a mask, he is possessed by another, represented by another and representing another. And in all disguises, the other is always the father (p. 98). In theory and in practice, it is always the Oedipus Complex: as in the Apocalypse, "pump, power, and politics is discovered to be sex" (p. 75)—perverted sex, sado-masochistic sex, striving for impossible satisfaction. For the desired object is the "combined object": frozen image of the primal scene—a "male female (vaginal father) or a female male (phallic mother)," "stuck together in eternal coitus, eternal lust, and eternal punishment" (pp. 70, 71). And this "could go on forever; there is eternal recurrence."

It must go on until we have overcome the Fall, which is the division of the original and total unity. The solution, the end of the drama of history is the restoration of original and total unity: unity of male and female, father and mother, subject and object, body and soul —abolition of the self, of mine and thine, abolition of the reality principle, of all boundaries. . . .

PERHAPS ONLY the most extreme imagery can elucidate the depth dimension of history, the web of pleasure and terror, truth and deception in eternal recurrence. But the imagery is not enough; it must become saturated with its reality: symbolism must recapture that which it symbolizes. The king must be shown not only as father but as king, that is to say, as master and lord; war and competition and communication must be shown not only as copulation but as war and business and speech. Unless the analysis takes the road of return from the symbolic to the literal, from the illusion to the reality of the illusion, it remains ideological, replacing one mystification by another.

Brown's concept of illusion (sleep, dream) covers, undifferentiated, the latent and the overt content of history, or, it de-realizes reality. To him, the political kingdoms are "shadows," political power is a fraud: the emperor has no new clothes, he has no clothes at all. But unfortunately, he does: they are visible and tangible; they make history. In terms of the latent content, the kingdoms of the earth may be shadows; but unfortunately, they move real men and things, they kill, they persist and prevail in the sunlight as well as in the dark of night. The king may be an erected penis, and his relation to the community may be intercourse; but unfortunately, it is also something very different and less pleasant and more real. Brown skips the mediations which transform the latent into the overt content, sex into politics, the sub-rational into the rational. Thus he is stuck with the time-honored quandary of psychoanalysis: the airplane is a penis symbol, but it also gets you in a couple of hours from Berlin to Vienna.

The "lower depths," the "underworld" of the Unconscious moves the history of mankind without dissolving its reality, its rationality. The roots of repression are and remain real roots; consequently, their eradication remains a real and rational job. What is to be abolished is not the reality principle; not everything, but such particular things as business, politics, exploitation, poverty. Short of this recapture of reality and reason, Brown's purpose is defeated, and the critical destruction of history, the discovery of its latent and real content, turns into the mystification of the latent and real content. True, in the language which reveals the stuff out of which history is made, the established history of the Establishment, from Romulus and Remus to the Founding Fathers and their representative government, today appears as crime, deception, lie, illusion; we are asleep, we are dreaming, we are dead if we experience this as reality, as life, freedom, fulfillment. But this illusion is itself a historical fact and factor, and its negation, if any, is a historical, definitive negation: historical goal of historical practice. Outside and beyond the historical continuum, the solution is nothing (as Brown's last chapter indicates), and that means: it is not. And within the historical universe (the only one that, in any meaningful sense, can ever be the universe of freedom and fulfillment), there are divisions and boundaries that are real and will continue to exist even in the advent of freedom and fulfillment, because all pleasure and all happiness and all humanity originate and live in and with these divisions and boundaries. Such are the division into the sexes, the difference between male and female, between the penis and the vagina, between you and me, even between mine and thine, and they are, or can be, most enjoyable and most gratifying divisions; their abolition would be not only illusion but nightmare—

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the acme of repression. To be sure, this gratification is transitory, momentary, and partial, but this does not make it "vicarious"—on the contrary! To be sure, *alle Lust will Ewigkeit*, but this eternity can only be that of the ever returning *moments* of joy, of the ever-returning solution of tension. Tension can be made non-aggressive, non-destructive, but it can never be eliminated, because (Freud knew it well) its elimination would be death—not in any symbolic but in a very real sense. And we still want to live, *within* our boundaries and divisions, which we want to make our own instead of leaving their determination to our fathers and leaders and representatives. For there is such a thing as the Self, the Person—it does not yet exist but it must be attained, fought for against all those who are preventing its emergence and who substitute for it an illusory self, namely, the subject of voluntary servitude in production and consumption, the subject of free enterprise and free election of masters. There is even such a thing as property which is a factor and ingredient of true freedom (Marx knew it well): that which is properly mine because I am different from you and can be with and for you only in this difference—boundaries to be enjoyed by you and by me. And there are "others," strangers who must remain strangers, must not enter my domain or yours because there is no pre-established harmony, and their otherness is not based on any economic position, social status, racial or national heritage but on their own self and own body with its own drives, pleasures, sorrows.

Here is the central fallacy, the mystification in Brown's vision. He obliterates the decisive difference between real and artificial, natural and political, fulfilling and repressive boundaries and divisions. Does the well-trained classicist not recognize the liberating truth in the concepts of *telos* and *mesotes*? Fulfillment becomes meaningless if everything is one, and one is everything. The sinister images of "burning" and "sacrifice" recur in Brown's vision: "The true sacrifice is total, a making holy of the whole" (p. 174); "Love is all fire; and so heaven and hell are the same place. As in Augustine . . ." (p. 179); "The true body is the body burnt up, the spiritual body" (p. 183); "The reality adumbrated in all sacrifice, in animal sacrifice, is human sacrifice, the sacrifice of the human body, as an eternal truth" (p. 228). No symbolism can repulse the repressive connotation: one cannot love in fire—unless one is a Christian or Buddhist martyr. Acme of sublimation: the unsublimated realizations of Eros are burnt up, sacrificed—they evaporate. For Eros lives in the division and boundary between subject and object, man and nature; and precisely in its polymorphous-perverse manifestations, in its liberation from the "despotism of genital organization," the sexual instincts transform the object and the environment—without ever annihilating the object and the environment together with the subject.

BROWN'S LOGIC is consistent: if the Fall was the division of the original unity which was total unity, then the redemption can only be the restoration of total unity:

> Fusion: the distinction between inner self and outside world, between subject and object, overcome (p. 253).

But such fusion would be the end of human life, in its instinctual as well as rational, unsublimated as well as sublimated expressions. The unity of subject and object is a hallmark of absolute idealism; however, even Hegel retained the tension between the two, the distinction. Brown goes beyond the Absolute Idea: "Fusion, mystical, participation" (p. 254). But mystical participation is not made less mystical if it is "freely" consummated, and magic does not become less magical if it is "conscious magic."

The last sentence of the last chapter: "Everything is only a metaphor; there is only poetry." To understand the reality of politics is to believe in the myth. We still don't believe in it; we don't understand; we are prisoners in the cave. "Turning and turning in the animal belly, the mineral belly, the belly of time. To find the way out: the poem" (p. 56). This is one of Brown's most advanced formulations: a vision of the truth. But poetry is made in history and makes history; and the poem which is "the way out" will be (if ever) written and sung and heard here on our earth. Brown had such a poem in mind, and he started to write it, but it became adumbrated by the ancient ghosts, by the symbols of sacrifice, death, transubstantiation. The concluding reference in his book contains the sentence:

> Then the body of the Enlightened One becomes luminous in appearance, convincing and inspiring by its mere presence, while every word and every gesture, and even his silence, communicate the overwhelming reality of the Dharma.

This does not work, and no new symbolic interpretation can remove the impact of the many centuries of deception and exploitation which has defined the connotation of these words. To be sure, the sinister spell can be broken: by the power of the poet and singer, even before the historical, the real break with deception and exploitation has occurred. But the poet and singer can give to such words a new and revolutionary connotation only if his speech and song subvert the established meaning not merely symbolically but also literally, that is to say, if he cancels this meaning by translating the impossible into the possible, the mystical absurd into the real absurd, the metaphysical utopia into the historical utopia, the second into the first coming, redemption into liberation. Brown moves in the opposite direction. He begins with tearing the ideological veil; the "history of mankind goes from the natural cave to the artificial cave, from the underground cave to the aboveground underground" (p. 39). In such sentences, the symbolism names the reality as that which it is and thereby invokes revolution:

> The revolution is from below, the lower classes, the underworld, the damned, the disreputable, the despised and rejected. Freud's revolutionary motto in *The Interpretation of Dreams*: *Flectere si nequeo Superos, Acherunta movebo*. If I cannot bend the higher powers, I will stir up the

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> lower depths. Freud's discovery: the universal underworld" (p. 241).

But then, the very next paragraph opens with the statement: "Darkness at noon. A progressive darkening of the everyday world of common sense." Of common sense only? Or has the darkness also descended on the "way out" which Brown has opened? The equating sequence: revolution=revelation= redemption = resurrection strikes not only at common sense but at sense. True, it is not merely common sense that is false; thus it may be an indispensable, rational task to reduce words to non-sense, "to transcend the antinomy of sense and non-sense, silence and speech" (p. 258). However, this task, if it should help us to find "the way out," is a political task: the silence is not that of the Tibetan or any other monastery, nor of Zen, nor of mystical communion—it is the silence which precedes action, the liberating action, and it is broken by action. The rest is not silence but complacency, or despair, or escape. And when and where such action is barred, the task of reducing words to non-sense is the critique of the established language as the language of the Establishment which makes sense out of nonsense: the non-sense of its preservation and reproduction as its sole *raison d'être.*

Brown's "way out" leaves the Establishment behind—that is, the way out is indeed mystical, mystification. The symbolic interpretation works both ways: it reveals the latent, the real content of reality, and it symbolizes the real content: it mystifies the possibilities of liberation. Revolution, freedom, fulfillment become in turn symbolic—symbolic goals and events. Symbolic of what? The answer remains, must remain, shrouded in mystery, because Brown envisions an Absolute, a Totality, a Whole which swallows up all parts and divisions, all tensions and all needs, that is to say, all life. For such a totality does not exist in any sense or non-sense, and should not even be the vision of the free imagination because it is the negation of all freedom, and of all happiness (at least human happiness). To be sure, in dialectical logic, the whole is the truth, but a whole in which all parts and divisions have their place and stage. The relations between them, their specific function, the different levels and modes of reality, its inner development must be demonstrated and defined—only then, in the unending and subverting stream of mediations, appears the true as the bacchanalian whirl: sober drunkenness of the whole: Reason as Freedom. Critical, not absolute vision; a new rationality, not the simple negation of rationality.

IN THE beginning may have been the Uroboros: male and female, father and mother, mother and child, ego-id and outside world in one. But the Uroboros has busted a long time ago; the distinctions and divisions are our reality—real with all its symbols. In the light of its own possibilities, it may well be called a cave, and our life in it dream or death. Its horror has come to penetrate every part of it, every word and every vision. The way out may well be the subversion of this entire reality, but this subversion, in order to be real, must itself be real, look in the face of this reality, and not turn the head. Brown affirms the proposition on the need for changing the world instead of interpreting it. If there is one proposition which should not be understood symbolically, it is this one. And yet, in the development of Brown's argument, both the latent and the overt content of this proposition are being sublimated and mystified, and his vision of total change, of the final union at the end of history remains under the spell of the primordial Uroboros, the unity that is prior to all history.

The way out is also a way back: regression at a higher level, regression sanctified, liberated. Is it again a case of The God That Failed: from politics to a new Communion, from Liberty to Nothing? (When will we realize that there was no god that failed because there was no god, and that the failure was ours, and theirs?) Anyhow, his song of fulfillment ends in silence, not in the sensuous, audible, living silence at the end of the *Lied von der Erde,* but the silence under the cross, after the crucifixion; not the eternity of *Alle Lust will Ewigkeit* (the *"ewig"* which is the last word in the *Lied von der Erde*), but the eternity which is not of this world, the eternity of Nirvana in which all joy and all sorrow are fulfilled—annihilated.

We like to have a different idea of Love's Body, and we like to believe that Brown himself has a different idea:

> To pass from the temple to the body is to perceive the body as the new temple, the true temple. The house is a woman, and the woman is a house, or palace. . . . The land is a woman, the virgin land; and the woman is a land, my America, my Newfoundland (p. 225).

This is it. The woman, the land is here on earth, to be found here on earth, living and dying, female for male, distinguished, particular, tension to be renewed, Romeo's and Don Juan's, self and another, yours or mine, fulfillment in alienation. No Eucharist, no crucifixion, no resurrection, no mysticism. To find this woman, to free this land: *hic Rhodus, hic salta!* And don't jump into Nothing. Waking up from sleep, finding the way out of the cave is work within the cave; slow, painful work with and *against* the prisoners in the cave. Everywhere, even in your own land which is not yet found, not yet free, there are those who do this work, who risk their lives for it—they fight the real fight, the political fight. You have revealed the latent, the true content of politics—you know that the political fight is the fight for the whole: not the mystical whole, but the very unmystical, antagonistic whole of our life and that of our children—the only life that is.

AMONG the many sentences in Brown's book which I like best is the opening of the Preface: "At least in the life of the mind, ventures should be carried through to the end." He has not done so; this is not the end. He has reached a point of return; on a new way, return to the earth. *Bon voyage!*

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WRITING AMERICAN

Louis Kronenberger

OF THE MANY books published in this century as guides to a sound use of the English language, only one has become a classic: Fowler's *Modern English Usage*. In adjacent fields there have been classics indeed, from Greenough and Kittredge's *Words and Their Ways in English Speech* to Mencken's *American Language* and *The Dictionary of American English*. But among handbooks, E. B. White, speaking up for *The Elements of Style* by his old college professor, William Strunk, Jr., merely brought back to life what earlier had had small claim to any; Bergen Evans quickened interest in language and usage, but with no text that has fully established itself; and the most flourishing of recent mentors, Theodore M. Bernstein, if useful at times at a journalistic level, lacks the judgment and sureness of touch for a higher one.

For some years before his death in 1963, Wilson Follett, a writer and editor who had felt a great concern, amounting almost to a sense of outrage, for what enfeebles and imperils the use of English, was known to be working on a guide to what gives it trenchancy —something more comprehensive than the usual handbook, more occupied with nuances and niceties, which he hoped, from its displaying similar qualifications to Fowler's book, might achieve a similar standing. At his death he had put most of his *Modern American Usage** into not quite finished form. With the manuscript at a publish-or-perish crossroads, its publishers asked Jacques Barzun to complete it, which he agreed to do with the help of a team of advisers—Carlos Baker, F. W. Dupee, Dudley Fitts, James D. Hart, Phyllis McGinley, and Lionel Trilling. For such a job there could scarcely have been a better team, with every one on it caring a great deal about language, knowing a great deal, and using it with great ability.

The result can fairly be called the most highminded book of its kind since Fowler, and perhaps the only book with comparable credentials, sensibilities and standards. This is a noteworthy achievement, sufficient for *Modern American Usage* to take in stride the further comment that, though a great deal of it is exemplary, a fair amount of it is disputable. In many instances this comes to no more than a difference of opinion in a field where those who set themselves up as judges are notoriously opinionated; where, indeed —suggesting less a courtroom than a crusade—they often exhibit as fanatical views about sentence structure as do other zealots about sin. In other instances I think that sound refutation of Mr. Follett's rulings is to be had in precedent and accumulated authority. But what the book perhaps does most of all is make us wonder whether new and much knottier problems of usage and language don't raise difficulties that no handbook can long keep pace with, and others that no handbook alone can ever overcome.

MODERN AMERICAN USAGE comes within speaking distance of *Modern English Usage* in several ways, a chief one being its literary sense —a real response to good writing, a real pleasure in what makes it good, beyond any concern for its being correct. There are no vulgar overtones to the book, no signs of "Mend your speech lest it may mar your fortune," no exhortations to better English as a step toward better incomes. Hence the actual text —and this forms a second link with Fowler—displays none of the breezy journalese which caters to the marketplace, or of the stock borrowings and parrotings from earlier manuals which, beyond being out-of-date, never commanded much esteem. Finally—and here I think is the book's strongest link with Fowler and its strongest claim to approbation—*Modern American Usage* is most happily concerned, comes most passionately and pugnaciously to life over small points, fine points, forgotten points of usage which, perhaps more than any other one thing, are the proofs, and the preservatives, of distinguished style and writing as an art.

These are the special merits of the book. In the matter of fine points, *Modern American Usage* brings up a very large number, some of them not often enough touched upon—the distinction between *apparent* and *evident*, for example, or the slender need for even the proper use of *transpire*. The book is particularly sound and eloquent on a number of more general subjects, such as overworked words, or what it calls scientism, or that irrepressible villain of usage, jargon. Since I have space to name only a relatively few specific items of value, let me mention the pieces on *connive, locate, rehabilitate, very, center around, had rather, cake (eating and having), due to, one of the* and *whatever, whoever*. There are many others as there are also, in passing, many rewarding comments.

I must confess that the book has also, and rather frequently and disconcertingly, some of the defects of its special virtues, and some of the excessiveness that goes with a crusade. At times one wishes one knew just who wrote what—there are no designations—all the more as Mr. Follett's widow has complained that in putting the book in final order, Mr. Barzun caused it to lose something irreplaceably her husband's. But—to judge for a starter from Mr. Follett's prospectus to his publishers about his plans for the book—one has a sense that he could be messianic and sometimes misguided, high-handed and sometimes quite wrongheaded, and that Mr. Barzun and his team may rather have been too indulgent of Mr. Follett's quirks than unmindful of his merits. So early as in the prospectus, his approach seems a little over-intense and obsessive: "I think," he wrote to his publishers, "of appropriate additions . . . nearly every hour." "*Welsh rabbit*," he wrote again, "will be right, and *rarebit* a piece of linguistic offal" —rather strong language about a quite common type of popular corruption. In *Modern American Usage* there are a number of instances of excessive reproof that seem almost certainly his; and one feels that the blend of hobbyist intensity and professional thoroughness which might have qualified him admirably for his project rather often got out of hand, turned

* Hill & Wang, 436 pp., $7.50.

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too curious in its decisions, too authoritarian in its decrees, so that we get a strong whiff in one place of the antiquary, in another of the *précieux*, in a third of the ostentatious etymologist, and finally of the pedant, as exultant as he is ill-informed. It may be that not all of this applies to Mr. Follett, though it virtually never would fit his continuators. In any case, it is there; and by being there most often with niceties and fine points, it weakens what is the book's chief strength, it adds a crazy streak to its essential sanity. Here again I am restricted to a few examples, given in a sort of ascending order of oddity and mistakenness.

(1) Of the word *usage* itself, we are told that it is used "always of words." This is not so; if no synonym of *use*, it remains a very live one of *treatment*—"rough usage," "barbarous usage"; and again of established practice—"Oriental usage differs from ours."

(2) The book speaks of epithets "that a studied writer will use only with caution." *Studied* in the sense used here, of learned or well-versed, was queried as obsolete fifty years ago and is today labeled archaic. If meant to impress, it can only, in the face of its normal meaning, puzzle or mislead.

(3) As the past tense or past participle of *bet*, we are told that *betted* "is the only recognized form" for "publishable writings." This is so fantastically untrue that the OED in the England of the 1880's listed it second, as an alternative to *bet;* its use at all in America today—let alone as "the only recognized form" for "publishable writings"—is so rare as to have small place in a book on modern *and* American usage.

(4) An article in the book begins: "Like *news, means* is at will singular or plural." Nothing could be more unlike: in practice, *news* is no longer ever a plural. "What are your news?" is a very occasional strained jocularity; I have never encountered any serious plural use in contemporary American speech or writing.

(5) The book calls "You're welcome to use my typewriter" a "mangled" construction, and decrees as alone correct: "You're welcome to using my typewriter." In point of fact, "You're welcome to using my typewriter" is a mangled construction, about as correct as for a host to say to his house guest: "Do feel free to coming and going as you please." The OED gives eight examples (in the exact sense indicated) of *welcome,* extending from the Middle Ages through Defoe to Dickens and Palmerston, every one of which takes the infinitive. Furthermore, the book's justification for its ruling is the "parallel" of "I look forward to going away." But everyone knows that in these matters analogy is a most untrustworthy authority; although, if analogy is to be brought to bear, *free to, entitled to, inclined to, obliged to, pleased to,* and *encouraged to*—closer in meaning than *look forward to*—also require the infinitive.

Were it not for the toplofty, unquestioning tone of statements like these, one might smile at them as *Rip Van Winkleisms;* as it is, anyone heeding them out of a proper respect for the book as a whole would be fully authorized, not to say commanded, to write: "You're welcome to using those news that we betted that studied reporter about." These and many more such judgments are the penalty for carrying fastidious notions to the lengths of a private language claiming powers of legislation. As it happens, Mr. Follett's own prose can be no better than his pronouncements, can be indeed as wordy and rhythmless as anything it condemns. Thus, where any well-trained freshman would say: "The book will argue that good writing tends to choose words . . ." Mr. Follett says in his prospectus: "The book will assume the position that good writing is marked by a general tendency to choose words . . .": twenty-six flat-footed syllables where thirteen would do far better.

AT OTHER TIMES, disagreement with *Modern American Usage* is a good deal more personal. And in the very act of disagreeing, one grasps that the book feels obliged to combat the lax standards of the age; prefers indulging even a last-ditch traditionalism to encouraging any newfangled freedoms. All the same, much that springs from Mr. Follett's feeling for established usage smacks of pedagogic or journalistic cautiousness—editors and teachers are often afraid they won't seem to know better—or is just plain stodgy. And here we come up against a conflict of "authority." Much as the final court of appeal for relatively formal prose is the best writers, so for something more relaxed, social, casual there exists a cultivated colloquial usage, sometimes at variance with handbook opinion, but always distinguishing what is highbred (which it adheres to) from what is merely stiff-collar (which it disregards). I recently stumbled on a perfect example of this while reading Virginia Woolf's *Diary.* Within a few pages she wrote "retorted on . . ." and used *quotes* for quotation marks. The first is highbred usage; the second, cultivated colloquial; the decision in each case is that of an assured good writer. And my second and last serious complaint about Mr. Follett's book is that it very often lacks this sixth sense, this social sense, and plumps for what is staid and even stuffy. Let me give two or three examples. The book rebukes the use of *anxious* for *eager* as in, say: "I'm very anxious to see you but I'm afraid I can't." *Eager* here is too prissy for cultivated-colloquial; besides, if in the sentence given we rule out *anxious,* must we not change *afraid* to *regret*? *Anxious* and *afraid* are equally a manner of speaking, but a time-honored one, against which "I'm very eager to see you but I regret that I can't" sounds right out of a dated translation.

Much debated, and eminently debatable, is the matter of *persons* vs. *people;* those who, with *Modern American Usage,* would champion *persons* have technically a strong position. But cultivated-colloquial does much to undermine it. *Modern American Usage* contends that "when we say *people* we should mean a large group, an indefinite and anonymous mass." Certainly the word is perfect for such a group or mass, but its safety doesn't lie in numbers alone, and its group-sanctity rather stops with the newsroom and the classroom. Cultivated-colloquial will

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far oftener than not say "No two people think alike" and will certainly say "The people next door." It wouldn't dream of saying: "How many persons does your car hold?" and if a hostess said to me, "I'm having a few persons to dinner next Monday and I hope you're free," I would certainly not be.

At times, the book goes beyond snubbing cultivated-colloquial into sheer pedantry. Thus it shakes its head over: "The Conference . . . is just weeks away," insisting on "a few weeks" since "the time would still be weeks even if the conference were five years away." But everyone says "weeks away" and no defense is needed of it, any more than of "He was just minutes short of catching his train." It is the objection that hasn't a leg to stand on—first, because people don't speak in terms of weeks when thinking in terms of years, and again because *just* is plainly a limiting word; one would have to be insane to mean that a conference is "just" 260 weeks away. This sort of thing is really scraping the barrel, not to say looking under beds, for blunders; and this sort of thing, in however good a cause, can only do it a grave disservice.

II

THOUGH THE excesses of the book are serious ones, even they go spiritedly against traffic. Mr. Follett's opposing archaism to anarchy, attacking vandalism with pedantry, if hardly more judicious than what it combats, is much less dangerous and irresponsible. But in truth a conservatism quite without his eccentricities would also bring home to us how much greater a problem the whole matter of "usage" has become. The business of preserving the niceties of expression is altogether submerged today in that of policing and protecting the language as a whole. For this newer problem is too large, too diffused, too irreducible to short specific examples, for any handbook to cope with. The matter of getting people to write well, of not petrifying language to keep it pure, or debasing it to make it lively, is rapidly changing shape; is coming up against forces that earlier were relatively minor or until recently not nearly so widespread. The old familiar ailments—"as good or better than," *unique*, confusion over *who* and *whom*, the misuse of *disinterested* or *infer*—are the merest sniffles and pinpricks set against what ails usage today. Indeed, the most serious, infectious, and seemingly incurable disease is an offshoot of knowledge, not ignorance; is passed along by those who set an example rather than those who need a guide. But there are other things as well.

Clearly one reason for the changing surfaces, and even structure, of language in America is the unhomogeneous nature of our population. This is hardly at all geographical: most regional language differences are of long standing and restricted to specific words and phrases. But where geography is very little involved, ethnology is very much. A powerful and persisting element of change is the effect of our great foreign minorities on the language, occasionally from home influences on their speech, consistently from book influences on their writing. Now and then we find the vernacular acquiring actual Italian, Irish, Yiddish, Polish constructions. But far more frequent than the un-English turns of speech which the children of the foreign-born may retain, are the English ones which they mishandle. Their addiction to false analogies, their distortion of established idioms, their substitution of wrong prepositions—such things are no longer simple offenses against a word or phrase, but a gnawing away at the whole texture of language. Thus, the stuffiest of correct constructions—"He was graduated from high school"—now goes arm-in-arm with perhaps the most uncouth of incorrect ones—"He graduated high school." Infinitives and participles swap roles; so do nouns and verbs; and anything goes as a connective. I recently encountered: "This was the first resolution in four years, when it voted to. . . ." (="This was the first resolution since the vote four years ago to . . . "); and the same day I came upon "a decision to require action" (="requiring"); "lavished with presents" and "the shortage of parking" (="the lack of parking space.").

Plainly, all this is something that no manual of usage can nail down or fence in. As one misconstruction marries or begets or aborts another, what we are contending with is not defective grammar but garbled prose. When, again and again, one finds phrases like *cut-and-dry* and *in the bargain*, at least such blunders are not structural. But when one long passage or paragraph after another is not so much incorrect as chaotic, how, if we are not to resign ourselves to such writing, shall we ever contrive to get rid of it?

Most anomalous in all this, and hence most discouraging, is how much of it comes from the educated levels of America and indeed from the educators themselves. If only because so many of these speak to large audiences and write for far larger ones, they do the language infinitely more harm than the ignorant or semi-literate; for they do more even than twist its structure or tousle its syntax, they rob it of ease and fluency. They dote on strings of long words forming lumpish sentences, they prefer cumbersome phrases to colloquial idioms, they care nothing for rhythm, they know nothing of style. Much of this is a very old story: the scientists with their hideous new words, the social scientists with a jargon that defeats parody, the psychiatrists who, from applying scientific methods to social maladjustments, feel entitled to two helpings of jargon. Being specialists with only a utilitarian interest in language, such people might claim special indulgence if so much of their vocabulary and syntax did not rub off on educated speech generally. For today's college students, today's serious readers and quasi-intellectuals, are understandably more concerned with ideas than with expression, and read books that analyze and theorize and diagnose oftener than literary works; and as they read, so do they come to write. But what, increasingly, is worse than the use of jargon is the misuse of it: words and phrases, as they work culturally downward, take on less and less exact and definable meanings, become sleazy clichés as dubious for sense as for sound. Perhaps the most notorious of these is *concept*, but it has dozens of rivals.

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YET THE ologies are not very much worse than the humanities. "Belles-lettristic" prose and higher-browed journalistic writing are all too often deaf to rhythm, stone blind to effect, choked with stale vogue words, clogged with dreary needless ones. We have all had a fling at denouncing the chic ponderosities—*extrapolate* and *charismatic, heuristic* and *epiphany, schema* and *exemplum*—only to encounter them twice as often thereafter. But worse is the general sense of prose clanking about in heavy armor. Why must people, even in COMMENTARY, write things like "the book is meaningful in its entirety"? What has this that "the book has meaning as a whole" lacks, except four extra syllables, one overworked upstart adjective, and one of the slowest-moving nouns in the English language? Yet this is how all kinds of people not only write but speak. Again, the passion in our age for abstract or quasi-abstract nouns, which makes a desert of prose and a death march of its pace, is bad enough; but it has led to something worse. Such a sentiment as "the intellectualism of his position, regarded as an implement of progress or a restructuring of society" now appears more stylishly as "he has positioned his intellectualism whereby it can serve both to implement progress and to restructure society." And when the abstract verb starts murdering our most living part of speech, surely prose itself must become our central concern, and much less in a delivery boy's letter to his girl friend than in a Ph.D.'s letter to the editor of a quarterly. I pick up a quarterly and read an average rather than extreme sentence in an essay by a professor of English: "The centripetal approach is thus, essentially, the intrusion of a critical momentum which often (though not always) is not only indifferent to, but even antithetical to, the centrifugal momentum which springs from the formal tensions resident in the work"—and did I not know better I would certainly think this was by a professor of physics. I pick up a student publication and read: "We find that social organization is grounded in dynamic change, such that interpersonal statica are transformed by oscillatory disorder into growth-oriented interdependence"—and I wonder how much it matters whether a few such authors are called persons or people.

There is, of course, another insidious form of educated writing today: it is educated men whose advertising copy and promotion brochures are spraying the country with rank verbal perfume and stocking the American vocabulary with catchwords we suddenly catch ourselves succumbing to. Yet the hucksters are really debasing our culture more than our language, and they can at least display a certain sales-tagged ingenuity and knack of phrase. But such garish salesmanship at the one end, and a galloping "scientism" at the other equally emphasize a third threat to the language: the speed with which it keeps altering. This is an age of violence, and the language shares it; an age of fads, and the language reflects it; an age of inventiveness, and the language runs riot with it. Dictionaries are legitimately under fire for not holding the line, but in truth it is hard to know any longer where the line is, or will be a few years after a dictionary appears. This speed is much greater in America than in England, and on that score *Modern American Usage* is not a very accurate title: American usage, in the sense in which a Mencken investigated and recorded it, has here been gone into very little. I mention this, not primarily to criticize but—which is why I mention it last—to repeat what the greatest strength of *Modern American Usage* is and how it might become greater. A book dealing with fine points of usage, a book conceivably called *Fine Points of Usage* could, with some additions and deletions, be fashioned from this one, intended for those who really care about what gives writing distinction and who are drawn, not pedagogically but temperamentally, to a study of words and a knowledge of usage. They, indeed, would read such a book every bit as much for pleasure as for profit. Anything with really broader aims must grapple today with far doughtier forces. No handbook can hope to rout them; the job goes way beyond a collection of small specific *don'ts*. If the job is to be done at all, it must be done in the schools and colleges as a major undertaking by gifted teachers, and in defiance of much else that goes on there. It must outlaw, or at any rate quarantine, the vocabulary and syntax of half the subjects taught. The age, to be sure, has many newborn things to find names for, and many complex thoughts and feelings which don't lend themselves to limpid prose. But where such things do not enter in, the schools and colleges must try to bring back to prose a social ease and human voice, and to take away from it the long words and longwindedness, the plodding efforts and pompous effects which education itself is fostering.

LOUIS KRONENBERGER, *the distinguished man of letters, is the author of* Company Manners, Marlborough's Duchess, *and many other books.*

* * *

ATHLETIC JEWS

Meyer Liben

I READ THIS book* (think of it! to read an encyclopedia) because I am interested in sports, interested in the Jews, and interested in the Jews in sports. Although professional sports have become big business in America, with a special kind of attraction, there remains a childhood connection, and by going through this work, I thought to refresh my memory, summon up old scenes, and so, through this external stimulus, this encyclopedia, make something of a moment in time that some of us share, a familiar enough exercise. I thought, too, that I might even come up with something outside the familiar stock of memories, and that is an unusual form of pleasure.

But, as is most often the case, when working from the outside, one finds little new (though I had never heard of Lon Myers, an incredible track star of the 1880's in distances from 50 yards to a mile), mostly the re-enforcement of the old, and I had to be satisfied, in my memories, with run-of-the-mill

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*Bernard Postal, Jesse Silver, and Roy Silver, *Encyclopedia of Jews in Sports,* Bloch, 526 pp., $12.95.

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stock, the way a peddler, on an established route, hesitates to exchange the proved, the salable merchandise, for the novelty which may or may not sell.

I recalled nights under lampposts when we traded picture cards (Rogers Hornsby for General Haig, Admiral Sims for Bill Wambsganss, Johnny Dundee for Clemenceau); the late afternoons when we'd outwit the corner newsdealer for a quick glance at the latest scores—you had to flip the paper, for the scores were at the bottom of the page; the simulated Olympic trackmeets in the street—one, two, and three sewer races, the figures streaking from the courtyard, trying to make the gutter in a hop, step, and jump, the run five times around the block, a foreshortened marathon; the basketball play in the schoolyard (real baskets), through the fire escape rungs, even into garbage cans, with a newspaper rolled into a species of regulation basketball; the staccato rhythms of Graham McNamee telling us, strapped in earphones, tickling the mysterious crystal, of what was happening on Saturday afternoons on those far-off gridirons while the shadows lengthened in the late afternoon (but George Trevor said it so much better in the pages of the *Sun*); the long conversations in the hallway, protected from the rain you could touch by putting out your hand, about the comparative abilities of the brothers Irish and Bob Meusel, outfielders on the Giants and Yankees, about the reality of Christy Mathewson's fadeaway and its relation to Baseball Joe's double shoot, about records and techniques ("never play a man too close"); the jaunts to Columbia's South Field, where we'd wait outside for the inevitable home-run ball from the bat of Lou Gehrig; the stickball games frustratingly delayed by the disappearance of the ball over a roof, no great accomplishment on a block where the buildings were no more than four stories high ("you hit it, gaw head up'n get it"); the quarrels over the decision at a base, over hits and spans of an immy, over the unnecessary push under the basket, over a historical question ("Nah, he never hit more'n .370"), swiftly turning into fistfights in defense of accuracy, egotism, wounded pride, irreversible loss, and historical justice.

So I MADE up my little package, could easily have added a hundred, a thousand bits of recall, toward a second-string Proustian flowering, cement style. But what about the Jews? That is a limiting factor. Now those of us who were Jews had, like the other minority kids (we were mostly all minority kids), a special interest. I don't mean that Dempsey, Ruth, Grange, Paddock, Tilden, Jones, Weissmuller, meant the less to us, as the great American heroes in areas we understood (though we had little tennis and no golf) whose exploits we followed with the fascination which only contemporary history provides, what is living and dying before us.

But the Jewish athletes had for us another dimension, and this, not the pleasures of memory, is what I'm staying with; these athletes were champions for us in a world which we had far from made our own. Three of these champions were Benny Leonard, Nat Holman, and Benny Friedman.

These three athletes shared an attribute we called "form." For us that was the highest praise, more important than strength, almost more important than victory. Form meant skill, speed, wariness, agility, it meant the fullest use of your powers, it meant movement and exertion proper to the ever-changing situation. When Leonard feinted his opponent, jabbed, moved off, then under the guard, and off again, feinted, hooked, and danced off yet again, that was form. When Holman made the shadow of a move in one direction, another in the opposite direction, then moved in the original direction, or when he made a sudden blind pass, through a forest of bodies, to the man in the scoring position—that was form. And when Friedman, the masterminding quarterback, menaced by giant linemen, picked his receiver (generally the nimble Oosterbaan) and made his unerring throw in this apparently chaotic scene—that was form.

Form was our delight by day and our dream by night. It was a substitute for strength, proved that the good little man could make his way against the world's obstacles. The song says that "it's not what you do, it's the way that you do it"; Hemingway called it "grace under pressure"; it is the harmony of the means and the accomplishment, making the hard look easy. And it was a way of winning, without being hurt (is this possible?). Though form was a gift for some, it could be learned, you had to make the fundamentals second nature. You had to watch Ty Cobb in action, watch that incredible accommodation of act to purpose, the ferocious exploitation of limits.

The influence exerted on us by those agile lightweights, forwards, and quarterbacks seemed related (I see it that way now) to the history of the Jews in the way of the minority situation, of the dispersal, and in the concept of the champion.

The light weight (135 pound limit) and absence of height are analogues to the minority position, which each generation learns for itself. I remember the shocked reaction of a child, in a neighborhood and school fairly Jewish, who discovered (suddenly?) that the Jews were a small minority in America, a tiny one in the world. "You mean most people aren't Jews?" he asked. Suddenly he felt reduced.

And didn't the dispersion, the wandering, call for the agility we admired, the traveling light and fast? "In skating over thin ice, our safety is in our speed." Didn't that fine sentence of Emerson make sense, one generation removed, as we were, from the pogroms?

And then these figures as champions, our champions. But in what sense were they fighting for us? Sports heroes struggle for victory, for fame, for money, but there is no higher cause involved (sportsmanship is more a principle of behavior, an adherence to rules of the game so that skill is fairly tested), one's life is not being laid on the line for a cause beyond the victory. Yet the sports champion is best in his class, and he partakes of the older and nobler meaning of the word, one who fights for others, for his country, his people, his cause (Hawthorne's Grey Champion). So ring, court, gridiron

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stood for field of battle, and our heroes represented us against the world which, we were coming to know, was filled with enemies, threatening us for obscure reasons. These heroes were fighting back for us—each hook, pass, basket, was a kind of blow against oppression, against the insults and injuries which we were not experiencing much in our own land (we had a strong sense and need of being Americans), but through the ancestral remembrances, and our slow involvement in the great and brutal rhythms of history, where Black Hundreds loomed and struck in the distant night. Here was Benny Leonard (and many another champion, all listed in this encyclopedia) to give us strength against the invisible enemy (but he was around the corner, hollering "Christ Killer") and we fell into a natural hero worship.

Natural because we needed a champion, not only as kids (everybody is so *big*) and therefore as Oedipal casualties, but as Jewish kids, and so our hero was lost in the champion, and that champion —light, agile, brave, and with great form (look how he followed through on that sling shot!) was David, the poet/warrior, though we were interested less in the poet than in the warrior, he who was angered because Goliath "hath taunted the armies of the living God."

HERE WAS THE classic example of the good little man in action, who gave away size, weight, reach, girth (imagine the chest measurement, the ankle and wrist measurements, of the Philistine champ, I don't mean Babbitt) and knocked off his opponent. David disdained the offered armor, he traveled and fought light, chose the vulnerable spot, hit the enemy champ on the head (apparently no armor there), and the fight was over. It was a one round K.O. and not a blow struck in return, the way Joe Louis would knock out an opponent while a spectator leaned over to tie a shoelace, and so never saw the action. The biblical details are sparse (should we expect the author of the Book of Samuel to be a sportswriter?) but the Shepherd Kid, obviously in a good position, saw his opening and threw his haymaker.

Much later (and, grown now) we faced a new enemy, and no champion appeared for the Jews (not even a Golem). Our sports heroes remained sports heroes, or became war heroes—like Barney Ross—in the general war. The daydreams of a million kids and young men came to nought. The methodical destruction of the Jews could not be stopped by a single champion (but what if someone had worked his way behind the lines and knocked off Hitler?). Great armies were required, and they were fighting the Nazi armies for reasons—historically significant, essential—which had little to do with the Jews, who went to their deaths nobly, ignobly, or outside the realm of nobility, in the manner of men. A champion did not arise, the struggle was dynastic. The fighters in Warsaw, and elsewhere, fought a losing defensive battle, noble in form, in spirit, quixotic in content. Victory for the Jews was not on the agenda. Only survival was, conquest being in the heated imaginations of mad and calculating enemies.

But the need for a champion dies hard and we still see him in the sports pages (then in the encyclopedias). Today it is (or was, until a moment ago) the peerless Sandy Koufax, throwing his curve and fast one against what enemies? The enemies are now quiet, or slumbering—guilt and exhaustion are having their day—but the need for a champion exists, it always exists for a minority, because the terror is projected, and if friends do not appear when the chips are down, we are thrown back on our own resources, our own bitter form of struggle, traveling light, swift, agile, and light, in the way of our archetypal sports champions, against powerful enemies in being, or in the wings.

MEYER LIBEN's *"CCNY—A Memoir" appeared in our September 1965 issue. A collection of Mr. Liben's stories will be published next month by Dial under the title,* Justice Hunger.

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*David Daiches, COMMENTARY, September 1965

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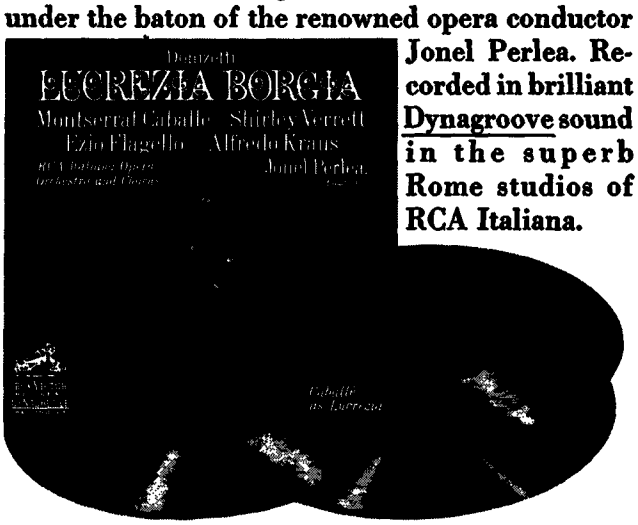

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ONE KIND OF LIFE

LA VIDA: A PUERTO RICAN FAMILY IN THE CULTURE OF POVERTY—SAN JUAN AND NEW YORK. By OSCAR LEWIS. *Random House. 669 pp. $10.00.*

Reviewed by NATHAN GLAZER

THIS ENORMOUS VOLUME is presented as only the first of a series on Puerto Rican slum families in San Juan and New York. It will form an important part of the literature building up on the Puerto Rican community in New York City and its background in Puerto Rico, and as part of this literature it bears a number of unique features. To begin with, it is the first study that follows the same individuals in their migration to and from New York City. Second, it applies the two techniques that Oscar Lewis used with such success in *Five Families* and *The Children of Sanchez*; here both techniques are combined and further developed, so that we follow individuals first through a typical day in their lives, and then they are allowed to speak and tell the story of their lives. Once again, one is amazed at the openness, fluency, and intimacy of their recitals—and in this case, one's admiration for Professor Lewis's gifts must be all the greater for he had less time to become acquainted with and gain the confidence of the Ríos family than he had with his Mexican subjects. Third, Professor Lewis has to a greater extent than in his Mexican volumes tried to encompass more of the society and culture, by including representatives of four generations, in four rather different kinds of geographical and social settings (rural Puerto Rico, San Juan, rural areas of the United States in which Puerto Ricans engage in agricultural work, and New York City); in addition, he gives us the direct stories of sixteen individuals, grouped in five major households (Fernanda's, and those of three daughters and one son) and a number of minor ones. Finally, this is yet another, and undoubtedly a major, contribution to the discussion of the "culture of poverty."

All these academic virtues, one can be sure, will be irrelevant in the storm that is certain to accompany the distribution of this book. *The Children of Sanchez* angered and infuriated many Mexicans; it became impossible to produce a film version of the book in Mexico, and the book was widely criticized and attacked. If this was the fate of *The Children of Sanchez,* which, as Professor Lewis himself emphasizes in his introduction, describes people, who, despite their poverty, possess far greater dignity and character, a deeper attachment to culture, a greater measure of loyalty, ambition, and Christian morality than the people of *La Vida*—what then can we expect from the appearance of *La Vida*? Here we find, in comparison with the *Children of Sanchez,* weaker men, more immoral women, more irresponsible fathers, and mothers all too often grossly indifferent to their children.

The question will immediately arise: is he indeed describing Puerto Ricans, in San Juan and New York, or is he describing exceptional people, leading exceptional lives, who resemble their fellow Puerto Ricans only in limited ways? I believe the most serious flaw of this book—and one that will inevitably cause a great deal of pain to Puerto Ricans and to others—is that Professor Lewis is ambiguous on this crucial question.

THUS, AT ONE point he writes, "I should like to emphasize that this study deals with only one segment of the Puerto Rican population and that the data should not be generalized to Puerto Rican society as a whole." And he goes on to recount in statistics the progress made by Puerto Rico under Muñoz Marin and his successors. And yet, these are likely to strike readers as only formal disclaimers—700 pages of quite a different order follow this. Moreover, only fifteen pages after this passage, he does try to claim a larger significance and typicality for his study: "The Ríos family would probably be classified as a multiproblem family by most social workers, but it is by no means an extreme example nor is it the worst I have encountered in the Puerto Rican slums." Then, in describing the remarkably rapid succession of spouses among his major characters ("twenty-six adults have had a total of 89 unions, 76 of which are consensual, and thirteen legal"), he continues: "The history of the Ríos family, as well as other data, suggests that the pattern of free unions and multiple spouses was not limited to the poor. It has been a widespread pattern among wealthy rural families. . . . This illustrates a general proposition which has impressed me in Puerto Rico and elsewhere, namely the remarkable similarities between some aspects of the lives of the very poor and the very rich."

In his discussion of the income and consumption patterns of the Ríos family, Professor Lewis again claims a typicality. And even in talking about their most distinctive feature—the fact that the mother and two of the three daughters are or have been prostitutes (it is this fact to which the book's title, a translation of "in the life," refers) —he must insist that his subjects are not grossly atypical. "In considering the extent to which the presence of prostitution has distorted the general lower-class pattern of their family life . . . we must view prostitution in the context of a slum community and the culture of poverty rather than in terms of middle-class values and stereotypes. Prostitution has a different meaning in a slum community like La Esmeralda [the neighborhood the Ríos family comes from], where about a third of the households has a history of prostitution. . . ."

Certainly the nub of any critical evaluation of the book and its meaning must be: is *La Vida* another study in the culture of

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poverty, in which Professor Lewis has pioneered, with particular reference to the lower-class Puerto Rican; or is it a study in what might be called the culture of prostitution and of the most disorganized forms of slum life? Here Professor Lewis's own evidence suggests that the latter rather than the former is the case. Thus, although there is a good deal of prostitution in La Esmeralda, the Ríos women surpass the norm: three of the four are or have been prostitutes and the last, at seventeen, has already lived with three men. Again, the Ríos women—of whom the mother and her eldest daughter have both had six husbands—stand out even by the standards of La Esmeralda, where "almost seven out of ten family heads . . . have had more than one union." A high proportion, certainly, but nothing like the record numbers we would consider typical if we were judging by the Ríos story.

But if the Ríos's are exceptional in La Esmeralda, so too on the evidence of this book is La Esmeralda —the oldest slum in San Juan, on the beaches under the walls of the old city, near where the ships come in and the sailors land—exceptional among Puerto Rican slums, and certainly among Puerto Rican communities. A number of times in the book the characters, in their own words, emphasize that La Esmeralda is something special. For example, one of the husbands of one of the daughters—he met her in New Jersey—is shocked when he accompanies her home: "I did not like the atmosphere in La Esmeralda. The people there use very bad language. Where I came from, you never heard a bad word from a little boy and girl. . . . And every time I heard these words they would lift me up in the air, turn me around, and drop me down again. I had never heard words like that in all my life, from the women, girls, old ladies, everybody."

OR CONSIDER this passage from one of the daughters, now living in a housing project: ". . . I got pregnant a little while ago and had to have an abortion. I nearly went crazy thinking about it. . . . So there I was, pregnant, and you know, I was ashamed. I was already out of La Esmeralda, see. . . . In La Esmeralda you can tell everybody about it and that sort of eases your heart. But here I didn't tell anybody. These girls I knew here are mere children. . . ." This in a housing project!

Given what would seem to be the place of the Ríos family in the whole structure of Puerto Rican society, can we not take *La Vida* as an important contribution to an understanding of life in situations where all kinds of social controls have disintegrated, and more than that, accept it as a sound account of the way of life followed by large numbers of people, in Puerto Rico and New York? Undoubtedly, many thousands of people live as the Ríos's do, not only in Puerto Rico and in the Puerto Rican communities of New York, but also in other slums, inhabited by other national or ethnic groups. Yet *La Vida* aims to illuminate both Puerto Rico and its culture, on the one hand, and big-city poverty, on the other. And as a contribution to the understanding of both these milieux, I feel that the book is radically limited.

The Ríos's are, of course, Puerto Rican—and proud of it; nevertheless they are in some ways very marginally Puerto Rican. One is struck by the limited nature of their schooling (less than other slum Puerto Ricans); by their distaste for the countryside; by their attachment to the minority conservative Republican party, normally supported by the well-to-do, as against the liberal popular Democrats. Professor Lewis critically points to the "rather broad and overly optimistic generalization" of two other social scientists (Melvin Tumin and Arnold Feldman), who wrote: "There is very high morale in all segments of the Puerto Rican community. The present inequalities are not perceived as insuperable obstacles. The social order is viewed as a fair and reasonable arrangement. . . ." Yet this statement is corroborated by a good deal of evidence, and one wonders whether Professor Lewis's ability to characterize Puerto Rican society has not been distorted by too special a perspective.

Even thinking of *La Vida* as a study in the culture of poverty, one grows uncertain. Professor Lewis's introduction helps somewhat to clarify this difficult concept. When anthropologists say "culture," they mean the whole inheritance of custom, pattern, social expectation, social behavior. They suggest, when they use the term, that it points to something substantial and almost palpable, of long life and deep roots, which will not yield easily to changes in circumstance. But in the phrase, "the culture of poverty," the suggestion is present that this "culture" is a big-city adaptation to uncertain and low income, and inevitable accidents and disasters, and that if these conditions are overcome, "the culture of poverty" will also be overcome. Professor Lewis points out that not *all* poverty produces a culture of poverty: "The culture of poverty . . . is not only an adaptation to a set of objective conditions of the larger society. Once it comes into existence, it tends to perpetuate itself from generation to generation because of its effect on the children." Moreover, it declines in "socialist, fascist, and in highly developed capitalist societies with a welfare state," while "it flourishes, and is generic to, the early free-enterprise stage of capitalism and is also endemic in colonialism." Thus, he is saying much more than that the "culture of poverty" is a simple *adaptation* to poverty; it is also culture.

THERE IS A good deal in this analysis. But then, where does the Ríos family fit in? Once again, the problem of prostitution raises some unpleasant questions. Yes, we understand how fatalism, a low level of aspiration, the early initiation into sex, free unions and consensual marriages, a relatively high incidence of abandonment of wives and children, a tendency toward female and mother-centered family, feelings of marginality and helplessness, all enter in. One sees how all this is related to poverty. But one perhaps sees more sharply how all this is related to prostitution—certainly an important topic in itself, but a different one from poverty.

Because of the exceptional character of his subjects, those who are bound to protest against *La Vida* as a misleading picture of the Puerto Rican community will, one

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feels, be somewhat more justified than those who protested against *The Children of Sanchez.*

THE WHITE GODDESS ALONE

LOVE RESPELT. New Poems by ROBERT GRAVES. *Doubleday. 48 pp. $2.95.*

Reviewed by DAVID SCHILLER

ROBERT GRAVES not only writes poems; he has a theory of poetry which involves the creation of a new mythology that is to provide poetry with patterns and a rationale. Since his poetry has for some time now been exclusively concerned with love, Graves's myth has been a myth of love.

Though he claims that he has refused to follow any fashion in the art of poetry, Graves's concern with myth is hardly unique among modern writers. Indeed, it has become a commonplace to say that because there is no longer a received myth which the imaginative writer and his audience can uniformly acknowledge and value, the artist must create his own myth, and then train his audience in the new language he has devised. Like many other writers—one thinks of Blake, Yeats, Joyce—Graves has responded to this situation by attempting to refashion from the materials of older cultures a myth which will educate his readers in a more relevant morality. As a modern mythmaker, he thus inherits the legacy of that kind of romanticism which uses old forms to contain new meanings. Moreover, he conceives of the old mythologies as reducible to a single fundamental form.

Consider, for example, the familiar story of the adventurous young hero who, having successfully completed a number of trials, is betrayed or killed and then returned miraculously to life. This pattern of death and rebirth can be found in the stories of Hercules, Perseus, and Osiris; it can be seen to be more or less explicitly at work in such biblical tales as those of Jonah and Daniel; and it can be discerned in Shakespearean drama. Like other modern writers, Graves maintains that all of these mythical stories derive from a common

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ancestor. There is for him a single story which may have been lost, which may, indeed, never have existed in its complete form, but which can be reconstructed from the myths we have.

Graves's earlier book, *The White Goddess*—once quite popular and now something of a literary curiosity—provides just such a reconstruction. For Graves, the female figures in the old myths and legends become a single White Goddess who is symbolized by the moon, and who contains all essential aspects of womanhood. Although the White Goddess is a single woman, she is protean in form; she is able to appear as a maiden, a siren, an old hag, or even as a sinister witch who gloats over the bodies of her slain lovers. She unites in herself all the creative and destructive elements of life. Her story is cyclical, moving from birth to death to rebirth. It is from her that the great comic and tragic stories derive: comedy starts out as the episode of the central myth in which the goddess and her lover are happily wedded; tragedy begins at the phase in which the lover is killed while the goddess renews herself and awaits new victims.

The opening stanza of an earlier poem by Graves, "To Juan at the Winter Solstice" (included in his *Collected Poems,* which has recently been reissued in paperback by Anchor Books), illustrates the central concern of all his work with the comprehensive myth he has fashioned:

There is one story and one story only
That will prove worth your telling,
Whether as learned bard or gifted child;
To it all other lines or lesser gauds belong
That startle with their shining
Such common stories as they stray into.

According to Graves's theory, any version of the one story worth telling must be addressed to the White Goddess, since it is from her that the story derives its eloquence and power. Poetry must be the product of the poet's intimacy with the mythical heroine who is both his beloved and his Muse. Graves's own poetry has as its main theme "the practical impossibility, transcended only by a belief in miracle, of absolute love continuing between man and woman." It is precisely this miracle that the White Goddess is able to effect: she can entice him to a love transcendent enough to exclude circumstance. He attributes to her the power to murder and create; she possesses whatever power order may have over chaos. If she fails to create him fully, chaos returns and the poet becomes another one of her helpless victims.

All this makes *The White Goddess* a tremendously rich source of imagery and reference. Its theory of poetry, however, is often absurd, and the dangers of its ambitiousness are apparent in *Love Respelt.* There the myth of the White Goddess exists as allusion and as an ethical imperative to seek perfect love. This small volume is part of an elaborate promise, for it attempts nothing less than a revaluation of love. But Graves has overreached himself. His poems are not as complex as the portentous theory on which they are based; they require more from the reader by way of preparation and "background" than they yield in new understanding and remade values.

Love Respelt tries to apotheosize woman, but Graves loses command of the actuality which might make such an apotheosis significant. "She" is almost always something besides herself. Described in her aspects of Blessed Virgin, nymph, princess, bird, genie, and moon, the White Goddess is lacking in concreteness and literalness. Graves's figurative language therefore loses its power to refine his meanings: his symbols have no basis in a reality from which we could define their logical or emotional content. His "woman" remains without substance, too fragile to bear her metaphorical freight.

As for the rest of humanity, it tends simply to disappear. The poet chooses to transcend "the practical impossibility of absolute love" by recourse to a miracle which involves taking what he calls a vow of "extreme possession." He thereby creates a woman he has an extraordinary ability to control, one upon whom he can make the demand of "Whole Love" and of

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"The Impossible." Once the vow has been taken, the lovers are left to themselves—or, rather, the poet is left alone with the White Goddess. They determine not to let others (called simply "them") penetrate and ruin the hidden garden they share; poet and goddess become the sole proprietors of all available humanity and all available poetry. Whatever is beyond the poet's ability immediately to appropriate and control loses its power to threaten by being dehumanized. In short, Graves's romantic fantasy involves a refusal to concede the existence of others.

It is a refusal also characteristic of Graves's earliest verse, which has a curious and disturbing affinity to *Love Respelt*. His first poems, written before World War I, are haunted by the ghosts of Graves's childhood fantasies. His imagination creates a world limited by anonymous monsters who are the source of anonymous fears. So that his ghosts can be frightening, the poet shrouds them in vagueness. This maneuver gives the reader a false sense of insecurity: Graves wants us to feel that he knows a truth too terrible to be told, but we are never given to know what the content of that truth might be. As a result, the female figures in these poems appear larger but not clearer than life; they are endowed with the trappings but not the power of myth.

The same vagueness permeates *Love Respelt*; here too the poetry seems to be the product of a fantasy which is unwilling to actualize the world from which it derives. We are all too certain of what the lovers have lost, but we remain unsure of what their desperate intimacy has gained them. These poems differ from the earlier verse in that Graves now wants us to feel that he has attained to a truth too *wonderful* to be told. In a poem called "Conjunction," the lovers are "beyond time," "past all unbelief." But Graves does not inform us as to the content of their spiritual peace, which appears to have been won without recognition of its possible cost or consequence. Love remains an unexamined final good, the value and emotional force of which are determined by its usefulness to the poet. In love, he can become whatever his imagination of metaphor allows; he can fully appropriate his own fantasy ("Myself the forester . . ./And you, dryad of dryads").

"Pass now in metaphor beyond birds," Graves writes in the concluding poem of the present collection, "Beyond all creatures but our own selves." The line indicates his final situation: nothing now exists to which he can compare himself except the objects of his own fantasy. He has nullified whatever tension might once have existed between the fantastic and the real. In this poem, "Dancing Flame," the lovers are "Armed with the irreproachable secret/Of love, which is: never to turn back." But there is nothing to which they *can* turn back: everything that is not themselves has been devalued.

The "secret" of love therefore loses all power to educate us in a new morality. In this respect, the theory of *The White Goddess* and the poetry of *Love Respelt* fail equally. The theory provides a rationale for Graves's notion that

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poetry preserves the secrets of the race, but secrets cannot be preserved by being told. To tell "the secret of love," of course, would be to dissolve the precarious community which the lovers share; it would involve letting "them" into the mystery—and it is only the mystery that preserves the love.

For this reason, the author of *Love Respelt* can never make a community of his readers, or, for that matter, threaten whatever community they think they have. Readers cannot enter an inviolable world. Graves speaks only to the initiated, to those for whom his meanings are self-evident. His love-lyrics are therefore entirely mystical, and merely mystical, for he fails to write poems in which the moments of greatest love present themselves as the moments of greatest intellectual or emotional clarity. For Graves, the stability of these moments does not depend upon his knowledge of their derivation; they do not exist precariously in a world of fact and time. Indeed, Graves tries to create them apart from time and circumstance. This attempt represents a failure not only of the poetic imagination, but of the theory which gives it life. It is a failure of logic and of form, one which may point to the dangers of creating myths at the expense of history.

THE JEWISH STATE

ISRAEL: THE VIEW FROM MASADA. By RONALD SANDERS. *Harper & Row. 310 pp. $6.95.*

Reviewed by EDWARD GROSSMAN

CAN ISRAEL BE explained? More specifically, can it be explained to the curious but non-scholarly reader? One can usually teach something about a nation by recounting its history from the moment someone began agitating for its sovereignty, but in the case of Israel—though it shares some of the essence, and too many of the trappings of a hundred other nations—such a treatment is always unsatisfactory. Even Theodore Herzl himself could not believe for long that Zionism sprang full-grown out of his own head, and those popular accounts of Israel that pretend it did, raise more questions than they answer: From where did this political movement derive such a religious style? What tradition nurtured it and what kind of men composed it, since clearly it did not reflect the bourgeois ideals and characteristics of Herzl? What are the sources of both Israel's novelty and its antiquity?

The point is that an ideal introduction to Israel would be a history of the Jews that took "Israel" to mean what it once did—the whole Jewish people. To recognize this, however, is to risk trying to write one of those multi-volumed universal works that belong more properly to the 19th century.

IN *The View from Masada,* Ronald Sanders's commendable way of dealing with this difficulty is to select the most important ideas and events in the history of the Diaspora—beginning with the struggle and suicide of the defenders of Masada—which nourished the "Longing for the Land," lending to it dimensions of myth, poetry, and religious rite, so that once the political situation was favorable, the accumulated nostalgia for Zion burst forth with irresistible and seemingly miraculous force. In the last four chapters of the book, Sanders uses this historical material as an aid in analyzing the current scene in Israel. By doing all this in less than three-hundred pages, and generally on a high level of conscientiousness, he has performed a remarkable feat of compression.

Sanders's thesis, his definition of Zionism, is an ordinary and safe one: "A modern, secular form of the traditional Jewish messianic idea," catalyzed both by the failure of liberalism to emancipate the Jew and by the emergence of racial anti-Semitism. The arguments he advances in the historical portion of the book are not new, but there is great value in collecting them, with graceful brevity, in one place. Thus, the reader is provided with a valid list of influences on the origins of Israel, such as the poems of Judah Halevi, the Kabbalah, Sabbatai Zevi, Hasidism, and the Yiddishist-Hebraist controversies of a hundred years ago. In addition, Sanders has gleaned insights from a careful reading of other historical studies. His suggestion that Marx, the anti-Semite, willfully substituted the working-class for the Jews as the chosen people that will liberate mankind by liberating itself, will not startle anyone who is familiar with Edmund Wilson's *To the Finland Station.* And the notion that modern Zionism, as popularized by Herzl, was much influenced by Nietzsche's concepts of heroism and the supremacy of the will, has previously been elaborated by Arthur Hertzberg, among others. Yet here, too, there is value in having these ideas applied and integrated.

Sanders brings an attitude of moderate Zionism to bear on the speeded-up, catastrophic, and finally triumphant events of this century. He calls the Balfour Declaration "morally inspired," but he also emphasizes that it "ran immediately into conflicting moral claims"—those of the Arabs. He is distressed by those tendencies of the Israeli state that appear meanly clerical, nationalistically provincial, or cruel to Arabs within and just outside her borders. He objects to men like Jabotinsky ("highly militant and cavalier . . . one of those semifeudal knights [from Odessa] like Trotsky and Isaac Babel"), who seem to have been driven by ambitions and animosities that have spawned unworthy policies. Yet he has no doubt about the need for the existence of Israel. He thinks it is the historical purpose of the Jewish state to provide "a local habitation" for "a universalist ideal" of peace and spirituality, an instrument of the "messianic idea"; the short-term and more desperate reason for the state of Israel was "to recover the moral health of Judaism," above all by providing a home for those survivors of Hitler who no longer wished to live in Christian countries.

Having lived and studied in Israel, Sanders has acquired partisan views on the burning issues that confront the country, and he expresses his opinions forcefully. His special praise he reserves for Martin Buber's "circle," for the German Reform movement (or, more precisely, for its pro-Zionist element), and for the "culturally French" Oriental immigrants. Con-

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sequently, he insists that "There is no reason why the quasi-Protestant, quasi-Anglo-Saxon spirit of the majority of the Ashkenazim should form the country's sole subculture." Sanders hopes that social and cultural changes now taking place will cut the Establishments—mainly old-line Eastern European—down to size and so permit other trends to evolve freely. He is on firm factual ground when he describes the Orthodox theocracy as "rigidly adhering to practices and attitudes no longer seen as relevant by the community at large," and continues:

> Clearly the time has come when a widespread religious reform is needed in Israel. The narrow and monolithic clericalism which currently stands unrivaled in Israel is intolerable, not only to the modern secularist outlook but also to the spirit of many participants in the revived religious mood that has emerged in the country since statehood.

THERE IS, however, some danger that the reader will be "bowled over" by the forcefulness of the author's argument, and that he will fail to see that some of Sanders's prescriptions are open to question both as to their realism and their desirability. For example, one wonders what sort of state Israel will become if what Sanders terms "the Mediterranean *aisance*" of the Oriental Jews overtakes the (somewhat oppressive) discipline of the old-timers as a national life-style. Doubtless Israel would then fit more logically into her Levantine surroundings, and peace with the Arabs might even become possible once Israel ceased to be a disturbingly efficient factor in an area of endemic blundering. But such an ersatz Naples would not be worth the arduous and brilliant prelude of centuries that Sanders relates in his opening chapters.

It would, to be sure, be neither fair nor useful to ask that the ordinary Israeli be suffused by the exalted emotion of the zealots at Masada. Nevertheless, it is neither silly nor heartless—even for a materially comfortable American Jew—to demand that the task of being an Israeli be different from the task of living as an Arab in Beirut or, indeed, as a Jew in New York. Sanders wants Israel to become at once more spiritual and more tolerant of her geographic position and internal demography. The risk, however, is that this will make the quality of life there more mundane rather than more refined. I suspect that the more sympathetic readers of this valuable book would not welcome such a development.

OF GEESE AND MEN

ON AGGRESSION. By KONRAD LORENZ. Translated by MARJORIE KERR WILSON. *Harcourt, Brace & World. 306 pp. $5.75.*

Reviewed by
WERNER J. DANNHAUSER

KONRAD LORENZ is a student of the world of living nature, its infinite variety and its astounding regularities, its grandeur and its harshness. He describes himself as a comparative ethologist and simply as a scientist, but thereby he does himself an injustice; it is better to refer to him by an older, more venerable term and to call him as he is called on the dust jacket of this book, "one of the outstanding naturalists of our day." The old-fashioned word "naturalist" conveys some of the flavor of his scientific enterprise, which reminds one of an age gone by. Lorenz does, to be sure, conduct complex and ingenious experiments in the style of modern scientists; he does take a methodologist's pride in statistical evidence; and he is inordinately fond of hypotheses, which he constructs, tests, verifies, or discards with the proper zest. But in large measure, and when he is at his best, he is content to observe, to look at the world about him with a patience and a precision that put our more untutored eyes to shame. In this, he differs from the typical modern scientist, who is apt to concentrate on controlling nature or even "torturing" her to reveal her secrets. In marked contrast, Lorenz conceives of his own activity as "a sort of dialogue" with nature.

What is more, Lorenz writes well, and this too makes him an untypical scientist. It is next to impossible to meet a reader of *King Solomon's Ring* or *Man Meets Dog*, his two earlier works of popular exposition, who has not responded to

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them with enthusiasm. Each is that rare kind of book one takes pleasure in recommending and discussing, trying all the while to define the quality of its power to delight. In part, that power derives from the emerging portrait of the author as one of the world's great eccentrics: a man who convinces ducks he is their mother, trains migratory birds to visit him on their way South, keeps a pet jackdaw who is deeply in love with him, and goes hunting for shrews. In part, it is a function of his uncanny ability to convince our jaded sensibilities that there really is a world "out there" and that it is a wonderful world, literally full of wonders.

One is reluctant to criticize *On Aggression,* for it shares many of the virtues of Lorenz's earlier books. His ability faithfully to describe what he observes is as great as ever: witness his report on underwater life off the Florida Keys, his analysis of the sexual behavior of cichlids (small fresh-water fish), his discussion of the facial expressions of dogs. As before, one finds a wealth of curious facts: coral sand is the excrement of fishes; birds and reptiles cannot yawn; etc. etc. And as before, we learn a good deal about ourselves by learning how we resemble—and differ from—the animals Lorenz writes about with such loving care.

On Aggression, however, is a much more ambitious book than either *King Solomon's Ring* or *Man Meets Dog.* Lorenz is no longer content to write solely about the lower animals, but devotes the last third of the book to man; and he is no longer content to write a series of loosely connected vignettes about the natural world, but attempts a major theoretical treatise on aggression, defined as the "fighting instinct in beast and man directed *against* members of the same species." In both cases, he is betrayed by his salutary ambition.

As a treatise on aggression, to be sure, the book contains much that is interesting and useful. Indeed, when Lorenz sticks to a description of the phenomenon of aggression he is frequently superb, as when he tells us how tropical fish will defend their territories from intruders or analyzes the violent hostility of one rat-pack toward another. Moreover, he does quite well in articulating both the negative and positive aspects of aggression. Thus, he is quite persuasive in showing the way aggression can function to preserve a particular species by effecting the even distribution of its members over an inhabitable area, or by leading to "rival fights" that give possession of the most desirable females to the strongest males, or by promoting those members of a species to leadership who will be most effective in defending it from external dangers. The problem, then, is not to eliminate aggression—which is impossible anyway, since it is a spontaneous or innate instinct in animals—but to keep it from running amok. This can be done because, according to Lorenz, aggression is but one of a number of drives in what he calls "the great

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parliament of instincts" and can therefore be countermanded by other drives. In addition, its potentially destructive effects can be inhibited by the process of ritualization, whereby it is properly channeled and sublimated.

BUT TO SPEAK of the use and disadvantage of aggression for life is necessarily to speak also of the quality and meaning of life, and it is at this point that Lorenz ceases to be illuminating. His theme, in a way, is the economy of nature, but he never manages to convey exactly what he means by nature. Is everything that exists natural, or is nature a term of distinction? Is nature purposive or is it mechanical? To what extent is culture "according to nature," and to what extent is it "unnatural"? We are not told. Insofar as Lorenz has a comprehensive view about the meaning of life, it is that of Darwin, whose theories he accepts almost without qualification. This leads him to beg a number of questions raised by the material he discusses; indeed, any question that asks, "What for?" about a trait or an organ of an animal is meaningless to him unless it can be answered in terms of the function "it performs in the interests of the survival of the species." Only once does Lorenz acknowledge the difficulties inherent in this kind of crude functionalism. He admits that it has been impossible to discover the function of "the wonderful forms and colors of mollusk shells," which cannot be seen by other mollusks or, for that matter, by anyone except the scientist, since they are hidden in "the darkness of the deep sea bed." But he is not embarrassed by this mystery, at once dismissing it as merely one of those problems "scientific research has *not yet* been able to solve . . ." (italics mine).

Throughout the book, Lorenz displays a rather touching faith in the power of science, along with the evolutionary process of which it is, he believes, one of the finest fruits, to solve just about anything, including even the gravest human problems. Thus the concluding chapter, one of three on man's plight today, bears the title of "An Avowal of Optimism." The reader, however, is not likely to share that

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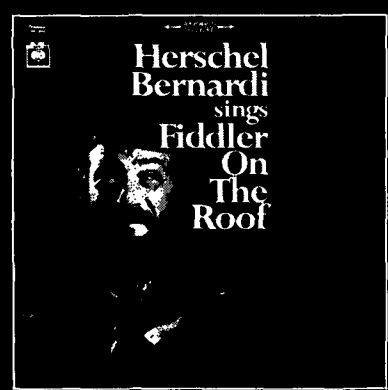

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Harry Golden Tells All

Twenty-five years ago I started a personal journal. I got the idea after writing pieces for the monthly journal of the Little-Blue-Book-fellow E. Haldeman—Julius of Girard, Kansas. I thought I might one day achieve the effectiveness of such great predecessors as Ed Howe of "Potato Hill," Marion Reedy of St. Louis, and Oscar Ameringer, a noble fellow socialist of Oklahoma.

I called my journal the *Carolina Israelite* to throw the segregationists off the track. I could not have survived four issues if I had called it something like *Tar Heel Gazette* or *Golden's Journal of Opinion*.

The Southerners read the stuff and shrugged, "Oh, that's just a Jew paper." By the time they realized it was not what they thought it was, it was too late. I had become sort of a big shot, and men of the local Establishment were beginning to take a proprietary pride in me on their visits to New York, Washington, London, and Australia.

There has been a series of books of essays, the most recent and the best, published by G. P. Putnams Sons, 1966, is *Ess Ess Mein Kindt* (Eat Eat My Child). About half of the material in each had previously appeared in the *Carolina Israelite*. The United States Information Service has had my books translated into most of the languages of the world. In Formosa, Korea, and India they use *Only in America* as a textbook, "to study English and learn about America at the same time."

If you want to try the *Carolina Israelite* for a year, I'll be glad to have you. It is not cheap at $4.00 a year. But strange as it sounds, it costs me more. I once asked the late Marshall Field; "How come I made a living out of it when I had 4,000 subscribers, and I have an annual deficit with 40,000 subscribers?" Mr. Field laughed, saying, "That's what makes it the most fascinating business in the world."

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optimism, for what Lorenz says about man is less than satisfactory and therefore less than reassuring. Some of it, admittedly, is worth saying; thus it is surely true that mankind is in the midst of a great crisis, that aggression will not vanish merely because we place a moral veto on it, and that we ought to view the aggression within all of us as an ambiguous rather than as a wholly negative phenomenon. But all this has been said before—and better. For example, there is little in the last chapter of Lorenz's book that does not receive a more profound treatment in William James's essay on "The Moral Equivalent of War."

The main trouble is that Lorenz views human aggression much as he views aggression in animals: he sees it as an instinctively determined, non-rational drive. That he should do so is surprising in view of the fact that he admits—he even asserts—the uniqueness of man and his superiority over the lower animals. This knowledge serves him supremely well when he writes about animals, saving him as it does from that dreadful sentimentality which invests beasts with human traits, but it seems to forsake him when he talks about human aggression. Indeed, he can write of:

> . . . the alarming progression of aggressive actions ranging from cocks fighting in the barnyard to dogs biting each other, boys thrashing each other, young men throwing beer mugs at each other's heads, and so on to barroom brawls about politics, and finally to wars and atom bombs.

Do these things really have all that much in common? It is true that all dogs, most boys, and too many men are poor driven things, slaves to their passions, as it were. But this was known before Lorenz, or even Freud, came along to tell us so. And it is also true that our passions are *human* passions, and that the most interesting things about the human varieties of aggression must be approached on the level of the specifically human. We do not much care to ask why the dogs should be biting each other, but in the case of the boys who thrash each other we want to know what "the fighting is about," and it makes a certain amount of difference to us whether a good boy is beating up a bully or a bully is beating up a good boy.

One need not engage in such textual analysis, however, to uncover the limitations of Lorenz's treatment of human aggression; one need only glance at the list of recommendations for curbing aggression that grows out of it. Understandably disturbed by the dangerous possibility that the human race may put an end to itself through nuclear warfare, he prescribes a series of actions that are no less banal for the fact that Lorenz himself acknowledges that he might incur "the reproach of banality" for them. What is worse, some of them are foolish. Thus, Lorenz proposes greater emphasis on sports as an activity that siphons off aggression harmlessly—as if it were not precisely the most aggressive totalitarian powers (Nazi Germany and Stalinist Russia) which invested most heavily in sports. He also advocates "the promotion of personal acquaintance and, if possible, friendship between individual members of different ideologies or nations." All well and good, but has that sort of thing ever had the slightest effect on preventing war? In 1870, in 1914, and again in 1939, there was scarcely a Frenchman who did not have a German for a personal acquaintance, or vice versa. What good did it do?

IT IS SADDENING when an author who has as much to teach us as does Lorenz goes beyond his depth. But *On Aggression* contains a promise of better things to come. In the course of an altogether fascinating discussion of the mating habits of geese, Lorenz writes of his "oldest greyleg Ada" whose "record of . . . marriages exceeds that of a film actress and differs from it by the quite untypical end: in the ninth year of her life she found a *grande passion* in the person of a hitherto unmated gander of nearly her own age and remained faithful to him for the rest of her life. She raised a brood every year and died in 1963 from being egg-bound. Her life history will be told in another book." Who but Konrad Lorenz would promise us such a book, and who but he could write it? If it confines

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itself to geese and their ways, it will probably teach us a good deal more about our human nature than *On Aggression*.

MIDDLE EARTH

THE LORD OF THE RINGS TRILOGY. BY J. R. R. TOLKIEN. THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING. *528 pp. $.95*. THE TWO TOWERS. *448 pp. $.95*. THE RETURN OF THE KING. *544 pp. $.95. Ballantine Books.*

Reviewed by ROBERT KIELY

WHEN A BOOK that is quite unlike books presently being published suddenly becomes enormously popular—especially with readers under twenty-five—serious people begin to wonder. What can it be? Why is this happening? Is it some elaborate "camp" joke understood only by undergraduate initiates? Does the book contain symbolic sex, or Marxism, or civil-rights propaganda not immediately apparent to the more mature and prudent admirers of the uncomplicated prose of, say, Mary McCarthy and John O'Hara?

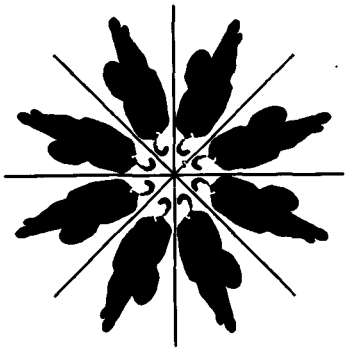
J. R. R. Tolkien's trilogy, *The Lord of the Rings,* has aroused, amid much popular acclaim, these and other anxieties. For one thing, most commentators don't know what to compare it to; LSD has been suggested and, of course, the Beatles. Yet, while it is true that faddishness plays some part in the book's appeal to adolescents, it is misleading to talk about Tolkien's work simply as a sociological phenomenon. Americans love to measure reactions, analyze trends, corner fads (and package them before they are passé). And, of course, there are always a lot of people who would rather talk about books than read them. But the explanation for a literary reputation—even among students—is still more likely to be found in the work itself than in a sociologist's poll.

The Lord of the Rings is a narrative of rare imagination, filled with wit, compassion, startling power and lyrical beauty. The author, a retired professor of philology at Oxford, draws on his knowledge of Anglo-Saxon and Middle-English dialects and legends to create an epic familiar in many of its details, yet perfectly original in overall conception. Frodo Baggins, a hobbit or halfling (just three feet tall), comes into possession of a mysteriously powerful ring which it becomes his destiny to return to its place of origin, the Cracks of Doom, before it can be seized by a satanic being and put to evil use. The three books deal with the Ring Bearer's journey through lands of incredible beauty and horror, accompanied at first by a small band of friends and finally only by a single loyal squire.

The temptation to find allegory in a book at once so fantastic and so suggestive has prompted the expected interpretations from Jungians, Freudians, as well as seekers after Christ-figures, Adonis myths, and wounded Fisher Kings. It has been suggested that the Ring represents the atom bomb (although Tolkien began writing about it in 1936), and character types have been discovered for Hitler, Moses, and D. H. Lawrence. Tolkien himself asserts a cordial dislike of allegory in all its manifestations: "I think that many confuse 'applicability' with 'allegory'; but the one resides in the freedom of the reader, and the other in the purposed domination of the author."

The distinction is important. Tolkien does not disclaim allegory in order to restrict the intention of his work, but rather to enlarge it. Analogues to historical events, religious traditions, universal myths, and private dreams can indeed be found in *The Lord of the Rings*, but they are part of an unusually rich, harmonious, and self-contained whole. The reader must submit to the newly-created whole before he can begin to find relevance to his own experience in the parts.

Tolkien's introduction to his fantasy realm is gradual, thorough (it includes maps), and amusing. One is drawn gently into Middle Earth via the Shire, that region inhabited by the aforementioned hobbits, goodnatured, sturdy little beings who like to tend their gardens and tell long stories. They are, in other words, creatures out of one's memories of childhood fairy tales, but there is an added dash of salt and earth to them. Looking for the comfort of comparison, a reader



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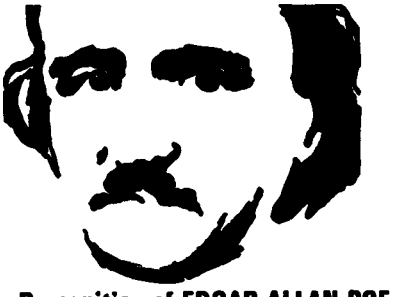

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may tell himself that the first chapters seem a curious mixture of Lewis H. Carroll, H. Rider Haggard, and the Brothers Grimm, or that the hero is a composite Gulliver, Pickwick, and Rumpelstiltskin. But such literary analogies hold up no better than do the strict allegorical parallels. The further we go with Tolkien, the more thoroughly convinced we become that Middle Earth, for all its air of familiarity, is essentially a new place.

FROM THE VERY beginning, the primary source of originality and delight in *The Lord of the Rings* is language. The scholar-philologist displays the astounding capacity of words to make new images of reality and to give life once again to old formulations. Tolkien has invented at least two new languages, complete with grammar, vocabulary, and rules of pronunciation, and he provides us with a guided tour through countries where most things and all inhabitants are called by outlandish names. We laugh when we first come upon such exclamations as "Gollum!" or "Fool of a Took," but there is a method to Tolkien's madness.

In *The Lord of the Rings*, names and the ways in which they are combined are never mere conveniences; they are a man's credentials, the signs of his family, his deeds, and of the region he inhabits. "My name is growing all the time," says one old character, "and I've lived a very long, long time; so my name is like a story." Indeed, most of the characters in the saga have long lists of real and assumed names. They also rename one another in repeated attempts to define relationships and to give substance to their own changing judgments. Thus Gandalf, the good gray wizard, is called "Master Stormcrow" by the wicked Wormtongue, who proceeds to say: "Láthspell I name you, Illnews." But within a few pages, King Théoden makes, as it were, a new man of the wizard: "I name my guest, Gandalf Greyhame, wisest of counsellors, most welcome of wanderers, a lord of the Mark, a chieftain of the Eorlingas." The most ominous fact about the evil being against which the good forces must struggle is that, despite pseudonyms, it is in reality the Nameless One, and even the name of its first lieutenant "is remembered in no tale, for he himself had forgotten it."

As we gradually become accustomed to such peculiar names as Frodo, Gollum, Bilbo, or *lembas* and *mathoms* and *orcs*, we also become accustomed to the peculiar but consistent logic of the world Tolkien has created. On one level, there is patent absurdity in proverbs like, "Do not meddle in the affairs of wizards" or "Go not to the Elves for counsel, for they will say both no and yes." Yet on another level—the one which dominates most of the trilogy—the sayings, like the strange names, have a perfect appropriateness and coherence. Hence, when toward the end of Part I Frodo Baggins, the simple halfling with no special talent, attends a council of Elves, Men, and Wizards—all stronger, more beautiful, and wiser than he—we are more likely to sympathize with him than to laugh once more at his name or hobbit-size. And

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when at last he says, "I will take the Ring though I do not know the way," we cannot help but be touched, as by any sign of courage from an unexpected quarter. Of course, Tolkien's sense of language and of humor saves the situation, as always, from sentimentality, for Sam, the loyal squire, concludes the solemn meeting with a deflating bit of slang: "A nice pickle we have landed ourselves in, Mr. Frodo!"

Just as their way of using words tells much about the dispositions of Frodo and Sam, so do the languages of the various races and tribes of Middle Earth usually reflect the nature of those who use them. The speech of the Elves, a noble and beautiful race of heroes and poets, is rhythmic and euphonic; the speech of the *orcs*, a brutalized tribe of killers and thieves, is harsh and guttural; the language of the Ents, an ancient tree-like race, is lovely, "but it takes a very long time to say anything in it."

Language, as used both by the characters in *The Lord of the Rings* and by its author, is not, then, merely a neutral instrument of communication or a frivolous decoration; it is a force with enormous potential to create beauty or ugliness, good or evil. Again and again, Tolkien displays the energy of words by putting into the mouths of his characters songs, poems, and praises of dazzling beauty, or curses, insults, and threats of almost palpable harshness. The good Tom Bombadil, master of wood, water, and hill, can cheer up a weary band of travellers with a "ring a ding dillo" or threaten to "sing the roots off" one of his willow trees when it misbehaves. When Frodo beholds Tom's beautiful wife, Goldberry, a hymn of praise comes from his lips without effort:

O Slender as a willow-wand!
O clearer than clear water!
O reed by the living pool!
Fair river-daughter!
O spring-time and summer-time,
and spring-time again after!
O wind of the waterfall,
and the leaves' laughter!

But if an evilhearted character tries to speak sweetly, his true language will eventually betray him. For example, the wizard, Saruman, is known for the persuasive and melodious quality of his voice, but when the shrewd dwarf, Gimli, accuses him of standing words on their heads, and old King Théoden rejects his unctuous pleading, the wizard's tune becomes a hiss: "Gibbets and crows. . . . What is (your) house but a thatched barn where brigands drink in the reek, and their brats roll on the floor among the dogs?"

THE ALMOST magical power of words, and the sheer pleasure which Tolkien's characters take in reciting genealogies and rolling compliments or curses off their tongues, reveal, in part, the influence of Anglo-Saxon, Germanic, and Celtic literature on *The Lord of the Rings*. In fact, the trilogy is saturated with the linguistic habits, intellectual assumptions, and imaginative formulas of those traditions which contributed most substantially to the earliest forms of English literature. Yet Tolkien's use of literary tradition is never merely imitative. Like most truly original artists, he has drawn on his own experience—which in his case happened to involve years of study of medieval languages—and ordered it into a new pattern.

In a certain sense, *The Lord of the Rings* is a historical novel since, by reading it, one can learn more about the mentality of the early inhabitants of Britain than by reading most conventional histories. The overlapping of historical reality and legend is a concept central to Tolkien's work; in fact, it is discussed by two characters in Part II of the trilogy. One of them, questioning the existence of hobbits, asks, "Do we walk in legends or on the green earth in the daylight?" And he is answered by one of the wisest of the story's heroes, "A man may do both . . . . For not we but those who come after will make the legends of our time." The saga of the Ring differs from—and excels—much current fiction precisely because it is both more fantastic and more nearly true. One of Tolkien's most impressive achievements is to have filled his pages with things marvelous without giving way to fakery.

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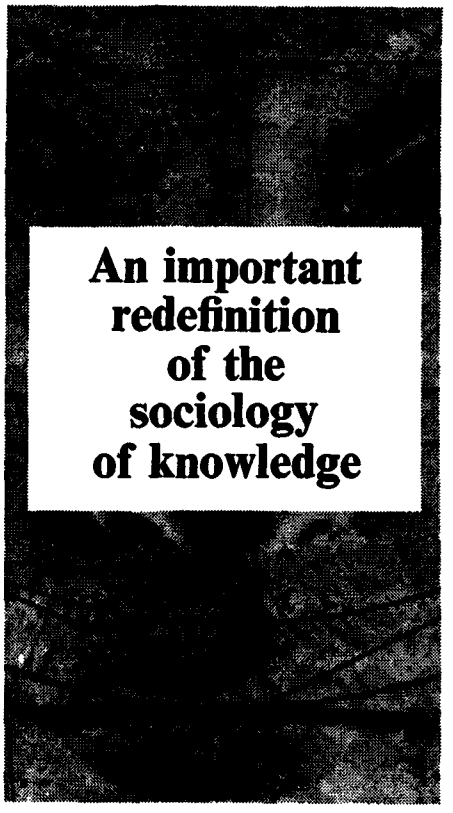

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by Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann

Since Max Scheler and Karl Mannheim, the sociology of knowledge has been generally understood as a sociological approach to the history of ideas. This book redefines it as the study of "everything that passes for knowledge in society," particularly the "common-sense knowledge" that constitutes the reality of everyday life for the man in the street. In clarifying the place of the sociology of knowledge within general sociological theory, the authors develop a theory of institutions, legitimation and socialization whose implications reach considerably beyond their specific field, and their "humanistic" perspective has relevance not only for sociologists, but for other social scientists, historians, and those interested in philosophical anthropology. *$5.95 at all booksellers or from Doubleday & Company, Inc., Garden City, New York.*

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The psychological and moral depth of the narrative, in combination with the sure handling of linguistic and historical detail, lends his work a rare authenticity.

In the midst of his wildest flights of fancy, Tolkien remains the scholar-artist, not content with mere description or analysis, but also intent upon making us feel the fear and the love of nature which man in a pre-scientific age might have felt. Such an effort must necessarily depend heavily upon invention, but in this case the inventiveness is nourished by knowledge. Not only does Tolkien have a flawless sense of the adaptability of Anglo-Saxon stress, alliteration, and epithet to modern English, but he also knows all about baldrics and jerkins, about wizards' spells and mead-hall customs.

It would seem that just this fusion of learning and creativity, so foreign to the common conception of fictionalized history, has caused *The Lord of the Rings* to be treated as a phenomenon bordering on the freakish. After all, a sense of the "normal" depends on what one is used to. And we have become unaccustomed to knowledge and imagination in combination. When Hollywood chooses to do a film about Egypt, it is taken for granted that it will be the work of men who are largely ignorant about the difference between a pharaoh and a fellaheen, men who will, to be sure, hire "experts" to add "authenticity" by fashioning exact replicas of Nefertiti's earrings for the heroine. In startling contrast, Tolkien's imaginative history, sounded at any point, has the tone of pure gold.

Even such a thoughtful and serious attempt at retelling an ancient tale as Archibald MacLeish's *J.B.* seems an alloy next to it. In MacLeish's play, one is always aware of the disparity between the language and imagination of the playwright and those of the author of the Book of Job. The play is interesting as a modern footnote, but it fails to penetrate or illuminate the original version. Tolkien, on the other hand, invents with a mind informed by the very accents and dreams of another age, and is able, therefore, to present his inventions to us with astonishing freshness and integrity. As in all great imaginative works, effort and self-consciousness are apparently absent; the tale seems to tell itself.

When Frodo Baggins visits the hall of Elves and listens to their songs and legends, he becomes enchanted by the melodious tones of the language: "It seemed that the words took shape, and visions of far lands and bright things that he had never yet imagined opened out before him." If one added that the vision also contained extremely dark elements, this description would serve for Tolkien's trilogy itself. Agitated parents would do well to admit the possibility that this time their progeny have discovered something of value.

BOOK REVIEWERS IN THIS ISSUE

NATHAN GLAZER, *professor of sociology at Berkeley, is co-author, with Daniel P. Moynihan, of* Beyond the Melting Pot.

DAVID SCHILLER, *a new contributor, is currently pursuing graduate studies in English at Columbia.*

EDWARD GROSSMAN, *here making his first appearance in* COMMENTARY, *is an editor of* Harper's.

WERNER J. DANNHAUSER *is an associate editor of* COMMENTARY.

ROBERT KIELY, *another new contributor, is assistant professor of English at Harvard and the author of* Robert Louis Stevenson and the Fiction of Adventure.

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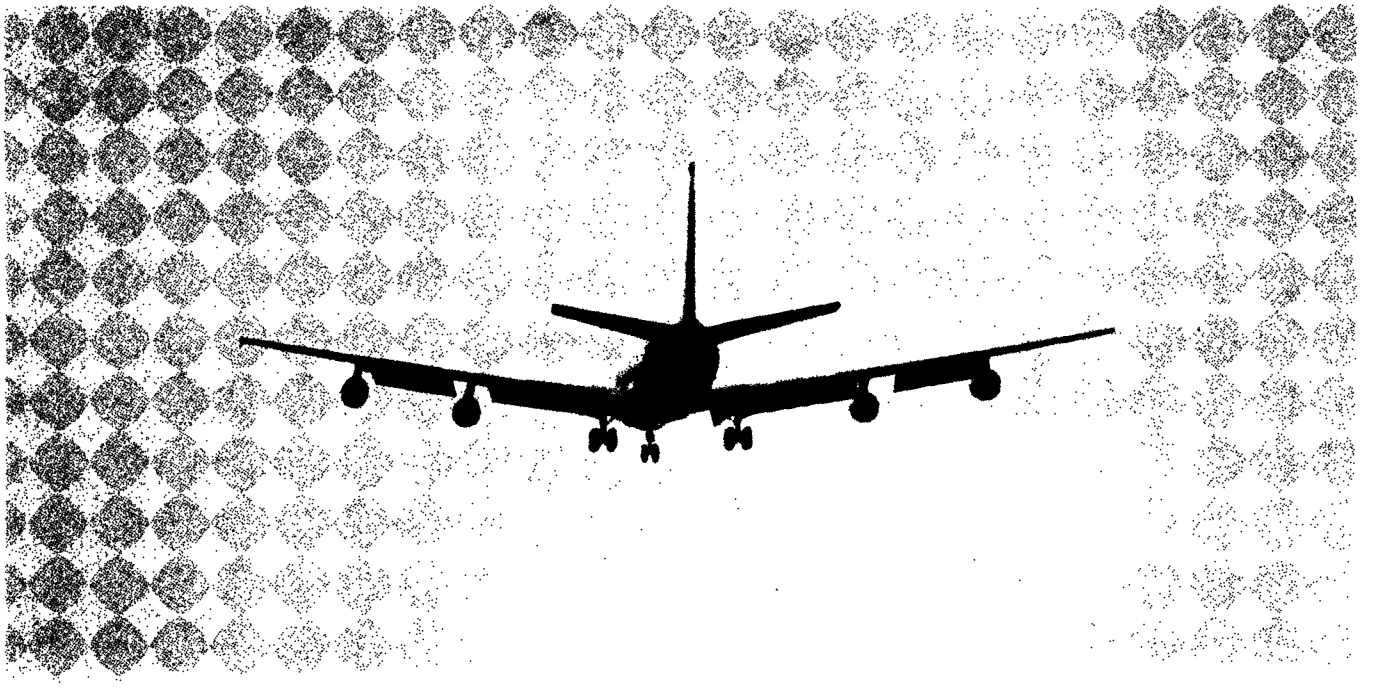

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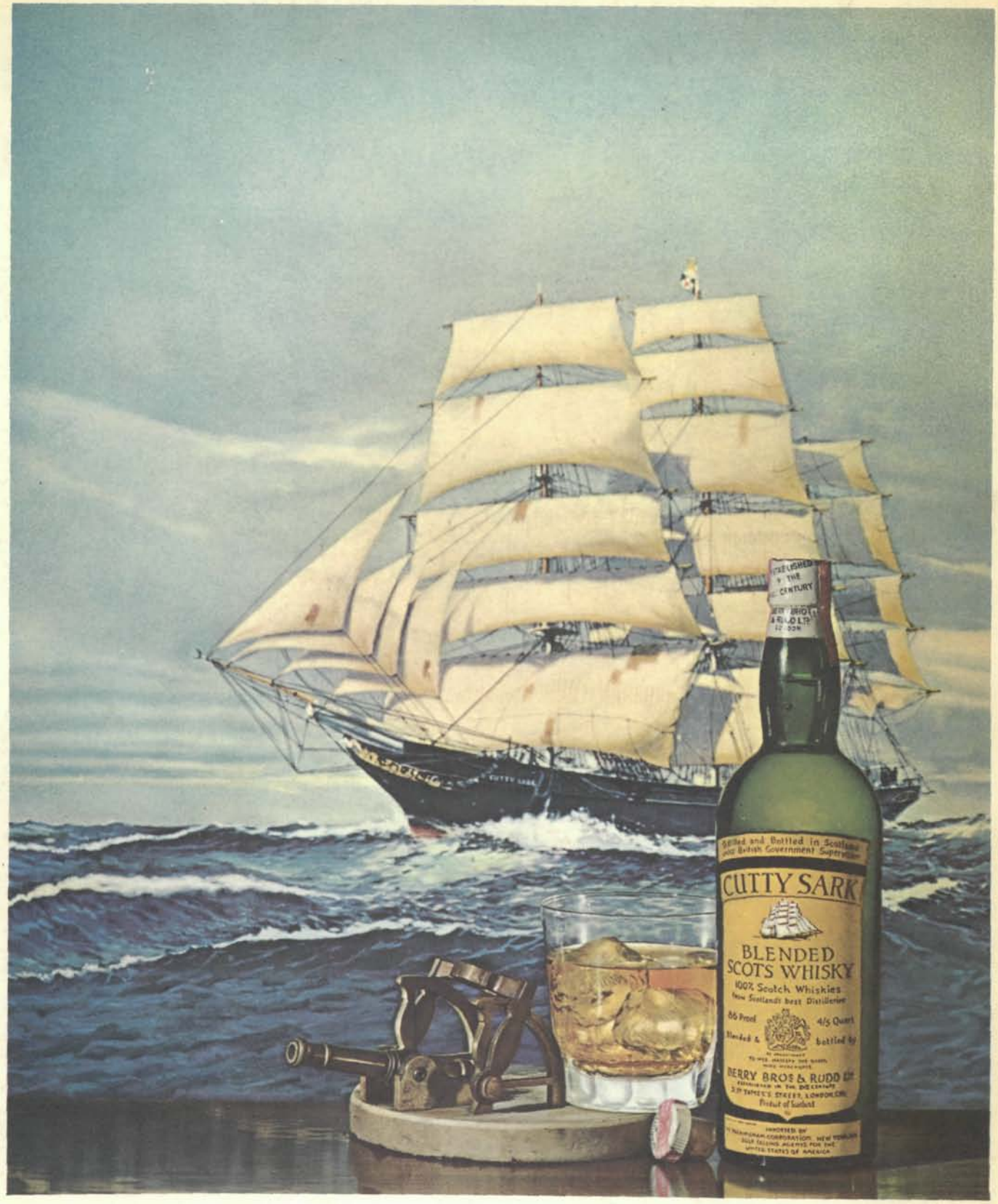

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